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## ABSTRACT

Among the papers included are the following:  
 "Exploring Literacy through Theater" (Andruske); "Heuristic Research" (Beckstrom); "Self-Direction in Adult Undergraduates" (Blowers); "Commodification of Adult Education" (Briton, Plumb); "Collective Group Learning" (Brooks); "Psychosocial Development of Women" (Caffarella, Barnett); "Writing Wrongs" (Carriere); "Power and Responsibility in Planning Adult Education Programs" (Cervero, Wilson); "Operationalization and Assessment of Conceptions of Teaching" (Hian); "Experience of Consciousness-raising in Abused Women" (Chovanec); "Changing Course" (Clark); "Measuring Teaching Effectiveness for Native American Learners" (Conti); "Using Discriminant Analysis in Adult Education" (Conti); "Relationship between Multiple Roles and Psychological Well-Being of the Adult Student in Higher Education" (Cook); "Community Education" (Dean); "Critical Ethnography as Research Methodology in Adult Education" (Dyer); "Adult Literacy and Community Development" (Ewert et al.); "Study of the Comprehension Skills and Strategies of ABE [Adult Basic Education] Students" (Forlizzi); "Knowledge and Curriculum in Contemporary Social Movements" (Kastner); "Wisdom, Adult Education, and Women" (Kim); "Research Agenda for Technologically Mediated Instructional Strategies in Adult Education" (Kizzier, Lavin); "Story-Tellers" (LaPaglia); "Developing Vision of Society" (Loughlin); "Institutional Wife Syndrome" (Macaulay, Gonzalez); "Living and Learning" (Merrifield, Bingman); "How Adults Learn" (Mezirow); "Discourse and Difference in an Academic Community" (Miller, Usher); "Workers Education" (Nesbit); "Effects of Age Composition on Academic Achievement in College Classrooms" (Novak); "Cognitive Strategies and Use of Prior Knowledge in Learning" (Olgren); "Perspective Transformation Themes among Rural Midlife

College Students" (Olson, Kleine); "Implementation Research" (Ottoson); "Work, Learning and Customs in Historical Perspective" (Schied); "Philosophy-in-Action in University Teaching" (Scott et al.); "African American Learning-to-Learn-to-Live in Response to Diseducation" (Shaw); "From Workfare to Edfare" (Sheared); "Educational Scholarship on Women" (Sissel); "Developing Human Resources during Organizational Transition" (Slama); "Women Teachers Mentoring Women Learners" (Stalker); "Transformative Learning in Adulthood" (Sveinunggaard); "Intercultural Competency" (Taylor); "Adult Education and Working Women" (Townsend); "Designing Empirical Audit of Learning Organization" (Watkins, Marsick); "Adult Learning, Situated Cognition, and Authentic Activity" (Wilson); "Tutor-Learner Relationship in Literacy Education" (Ziegahn, Hinchman); "Conceptions of Transformation in Adult Education" (Dirkx et al.) (MN)

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**34th Annual  
Adult Education  
Research Conference  
AERC  
1993**

**Proceedings**

**Edited by  
Daniele Flannery**

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Dear AERC Participant:

We are pleased to welcome you the 34th Annual Adult Education Research Conference. We would like to thank Daniele Flannery, Jovita Ross-Gordon, and the other members of the Penn State Local Arrangements Committee for preparing and facilitating the conference.

The AERC conference papers continue to reflect a growing diversity of research perspectives, methodologies and issues. As a Steering Committee, we have sought to embrace this diversity by accepting a larger number of papers in more varied formats while maintaining high standards of quality. We are pleased to recognize and welcome the African-American Graduate Student Preconference as a significant example of other individuals' efforts to promote diversity at the conference and in the field as a whole.

We would like to draw your attention to a special session devoted to discussion of potential changes in the conference format. In light of the many changes taking place in the field and its research, it seems timely to consider whether the current format accommodates these changes. We strongly urge you to join us in this discussion.

We hope that you find the conference to be rewarding, both personally and professionally.

Betty Hayes  
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Ann Brooks  
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Sponsored by the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education, the purpose of the Okes Award is to recognize the work of persons whose research contributes significantly to the advancement of adult and continuing education. It is given in honor of the late Imogene Okes, whose research reports were widely used and quoted in the field, and is an indicator of the quality of research desired from the field and profession. The work should be: based on a topic that has significant implications for the field, build on and expand the knowledge on which the field is based, use appropriate research methodology, and embody excellence consistent with the best traditions of adult education research.

Descriptive guidelines and criteria are available upon request. To nominate a publication, send five copies of a nominating letter describing how the publication complies with the guidelines to: Dr. Juliet Merrifield, Center for Literacy Studies, University of Tennessee, 2046 Terrace Avenue, Knoxville TN 37996-3400.

**The deadline for nominations is July 1, 1993.**

### (THE PAACE JOURNAL OF LIFELONG LEARNING)

The PAACE Journal of lifelong Learning is a refereed journal in which practitioner oriented articles in adult, continuing, and community education are published. The journal has several departments including feature articles, refereed articles, forum articles, and resources articles. The journal is published by the Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education. Editorial Guidelines can be obtained from, and submissions should be sent to:

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**EXPLORING LITERACY THROUGH THEATRE: THE IMPACT OF PERFORMING ON  
LITERACY AND UPGRADING STUDENTS**

Cynthia Lee Andruske - University of British Columbia

**Abstract:** This paper explored the impact performing in the literacy play Marks on Paper had on adult literacy and upgrading students in British Columbia, Canada, from 1989-1992. The findings suggest that through performance learner/actors experienced an increased positive self-image and an increased awareness about illiteracy. Often this translated into a sense of empowerment resulting in transformations in perspectives and actions for the students.

**Surveying the Context:** During the 1980's, Canadians became aware that a serious literacy problem existed. This concern grew with the realization that illiteracy translates into loss of economic and technological benefits and immeasurable human suffering and stereotyping. Thus, community groups and educators began seeking ways to reach illiterate Canadian adults.

**Popular Theatre:** Throughout the literacy campaigns of the 1960's and 1970's in the Third World, one novel technique used to raise awareness about illiteracy was popular theatre. It seeks to turn theatre into a meaning creating experience for initiating revolutionary activities against oppressive governments and agencies. Through popular theatre, the less educated and the oppressed identify and develop novel problem solving strategies for resolving community issues. It is "theatre which speaks to the common man in his language and idiom and deals with problems of direct relevance to his situation" (Brooks, 1974, p. 7). Furthermore, popular theatre "deals with the people's own reality - their issues, their problems and from their perspective - and this makes it their theatre rather than an imposition of someone else's culture" (Kidd, 1979, p. 4).

**A Novel Experiment:** In 1979, Coordinator David Thomas wanted to improve delivery of the Adult Basic Education Program for Northern Lights College in Fort St. John, British Columbia. After reading about popular theatre, he decided to use this novel method within a Canadian context to raise awareness and promote social change about adult illiteracy. His goal was to attract literacy learners to attend classes, upgrade their education, and let them know that they were not alone. With the help of Brian Paisley and Ti Hallas of Chinook Touring Theatre at Northern Lights College, Vancouver playwright John Lazarus was commissioned to write Marks on Paper (1987), a play based on the lives of adult illiterates, which successfully toured B.C. from 1979-1980.

In North America, people consider theatre the domain of amateur and professional actors. This exclusive domain was not to last long with Marks on Paper. In 1989, the play's production for a Fraser Valley College learner event in Abbotsford, B.C., began a new phase for the play with a unique twist. For the very first time, it was performed by a group of upgrading and literacy students: the Literacy Players. After the initial performance, the Literacy Players' version of Marks on Paper enjoyed an unexpected growth in popularity. For three years, the group performed throughout B.C. in diverse settings for varied audiences. In addition to promoting awareness about literacy issues, the Literacy Players motivated four learner spin-off productions within B.C.: the Heartbeat Players in Victoria, East Kootenay Community College Learners in Cranbrook, Literacy Is Freedom for Everyone Learners in Williams Lake, and S.D. #28 Continuing Education Learners in Quesnel.

**Choosing the Quest:** As more and more non-professional groups began performing Marks on Paper throughout B.C., I questioned why untrained upgrading and literacy students would attempt to perform in a medium foreign to them about a subject such as illiteracy. Thus, the purpose of this study became to explore the impact the experience of performing in Marks on Paper, a play about adult illiteracy, had on the literacy/learner and upgrading student actors in the productions from 1989-1992.



#### METHOD

The research design chosen for this study was a historical case study of Marks on Paper. The play experienced three phases in its history: Chinook Touring Theatre, Literacy Players, and their four spin-off productions.

Criterion-based sampling was used to select the respondents since over the course of the play's thirteen year history at least eleven groups and over 55 people had performed in Marks on Paper. Selection of learner/actors and productions were based on four criteria. 1) Participants had to be literacy learners or upgrading students. 2) Learners had to be enrolled or recently enrolled in upgrading or literacy courses within their communities at the time they began performing the play. 3) The groups had to have performed or intended to for a public audience. 4) Instructors, directors, and producers were considered as integral members of the production and team process. These criteria reduced the productions to four, the learner/actors to 34, and the instructor/director/actors to nine. Of these, 22 learner/actors and six actors/instructor/directors were interviewed. Loss of contact and socially acceptable excuses, such as work and illness were given for non-participation.

Data sources consisted of three methods. 1) An audio-taped, semi-structured, open-ended interview was the primary source of data collection. Twenty of the 22 learner/actor were interviewed in-person and two by taped telephone interviews. 2) Documents and artifacts collected from the groups included play programs, newspaper clippings, journals, learner event reports, personal scrapbooks, photographs, and props. 3) Observations were made from videotapes and live events; plus, I was a participant-observer.

#### RESULTS

After the transcribed interviews were analyzed, compared, and triangulated, three major categories and seven themes emerged. The impact of Marks on Paper was reflected in I PSYCHO-SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS. This created an increased 1) self-image and 2) belongingness. II SOCIO-POLITICAL PERSPECTIVES were manifested in 1) raised awareness, 2) empowerment, and 3) transformation/action. Finally, the play had a III SOCIO-EDUCATIONAL impact discussed by the students in terms of 1) learning and 2) teaching. While the play had a significant impact, it was not the sole factor that influenced the learners. Marks on Paper served as a catalyst along with self-motivation, returning to school, significant instructors/teachers, new peer friendships, and a commitment to the play itself. These components worked in conjunction, and the play was a catalyst, not a panacea, through which theatre created a positive, reflective, and transformative experiential impact on the literacy/ learner and upgrading students. Furthermore, by performing in Marks on Paper, most students deepened their understanding about illiteracy through dramatic tension which forced the learner/actor to look at the human side of illiteracy in their daily lives. The reactions ranged from "That's me up there," to increased awareness of what illiterates encounter in society. The play illustrated that illiterates have a choice to become literate, and that there is help available. Also, the play served to create greater networks among learners while it empowered them to create awareness in and dialogue with others in a search for and implementation of constructive community strategies for addressing illiteracy.

#### PSYCHO-SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

**Self-Image:** From the conversations with the respondents, I discovered that many learner/actors performing in the play had begun looking at themselves more positively. This positive self-image was reflected in their increased a) self-esteem, b) self-confidence, and c) pride.

**Self-Esteem:** Many of the respondents had become active in the play because either they or significant others thought the play would increase their self-esteem. For example, one woman said that after she had been asked by her teacher to be in the play she had answered: "I said, 'Sure,' thinking again it's just going to be something we do in our classroom ....that'll be good because I had a low self-esteem problem, that's something I needed to...not to be so nervous about. That'll work out good,..." (CE-1).

During an interview, I asked one learner what the play meant to him. Speaking on behalf of himself and the other performers, this learner's insistent answer reflects the meaning the play had for many students: "**SELF-ESTEEM--THAT'S THE MEANING...** I think that if a group of learners do the play, at least one person will come out of there with better self-esteem. And I think that for...me as a learner, I don't think a learner's going to go anywhere unless they have that. So if that's all the play do, is create self-esteem(...), I think that it's a very important play" (HB-1).

**Self-Confidence:** Initially, not all learners had lacked self-confidence, but all were nervous about performing. Through stage experience, learners helping each other, determination, and other significant group members, the students gained even more self-confidence in public and personal expression. One learner/actor captures these thoughts when she says: "And doing the play just made (standing up and speaking) much more easier for me. Of course giving me the opening line was encouraging me to stand up and say, 'Excuse me! I'm going to talk!' And then say my line. So that was kind of a shock, thinking that I'm going to have the opening line, so that was kind of neat" (LL-3).

**Pride:** In my analysis, I discovered that the learners often described pride as an external manifestation of the self-esteem that they felt. In addition, I observed pride in personal grooming before events. For example, many were concerned with their hair and ensured that it was styled before a performance. Moreover, the props that they chose became significant. Even more important was how the students perceived themselves. One woman encapsulates these thoughts by saying: "My body language has changed a lot now than before, which I can remember before, I'm kind of like slouching and kind of always depressed because I didn't feel good about myself. (Now) My body language was kind of like I'm feeling better about myself, so my body language has gone up too. I have a straight back, and my shoulders are back, I'm walking proud like, 'Hey, I'm not embarrassed any more. This is great. I feel good about myself, and 'I don't care what you think of me, I feel good about myself'" (EK-2).

**Belongingness:** Marks on Paper elicited a sense of belongingness. This was illustrated in a) relationships with others and b) knowing through body language. What seemed to be reflected in the data is that we belong to groups through different signs and codes that are manifested through physical or visual association. For example, people who have problems with reading and writing may know forgetting glasses is a sign of an inability to read or write. However, people who can read and write would not associate illiteracy with this, so they are not aware of the secret, unspoken codes.

**Relationships with Others:** Many of the learners gained a sense of belongingness from interacting with others. As well, learners began to see themselves as students who performed Marks on Paper in their home towns. They also saw themselves as a provincial network of learners connected through the experience of performing in the play.

**Knowing Through Body Language:** Literacy students were quick to pick up and relate to the "cover up" signs and codes portrayed in the vignettes. For example, a common ploy of many illiterates is to bandage a hand so that they will not have to write even though there is nothing physically wrong with the hand. People who have not experienced problems with reading and writing take a bandaged hand at face value; however, illiterates do not. They know that they too have sometimes bandaged a hand in order to avoid writing at school or in the workplace. They perceive this coping skill as being more socially acceptable than admitting inability to read or write.

#### **SOCIO-POLITICAL PERSPECTIVES**

**Raising Awareness:** Throughout the interviews, literacy learners described or spoke of how they began to think (self-reflection) about themselves as illiterates or as people who had learning problems. As well, students verbalized how society perceived illiterates. These two themes were manifested in a) self-perception and b) societal perceptions of people with learning problems.



**Self-Perception:** Often due to having been labelled disapprovingly by others, especially family members, literacy learners perceived themselves very negatively. Many felt like they were alone. Often learners described their experience of isolation within illiteracy akin to hiding in a closet. They did not see themselves as normal human beings. One young woman described how she felt: "I'm sure a lot of people (who) have this problem kind of feel like the Elephant Man...they feel they can't tell anybody because they're different. They feel really different; that's how they're like the Elephant Man" (LP-4).

**Societal Perceptions:** In addition to literacy learners feeling that they were outcasts, upgrading students often described how society perceived illiterates as deviant and in some cases dumb, lazy, and stupid. However, others described illiterates differently as one man stated: "When I thought about someone that can't read or write, I'd think of this fellow with a straw hat walking down a country path with bare feet. Like a Huck Finn sort of guy or a Tom Sawyer, ...learning about other stuff, filling his day with other things" (LP-6).

**Empowerment:** The sense of empowerment that many learners described throughout was a gradual process that went hand-in-hand with the reflective process as the learners experienced the play. Empowerment was related by the learners as a) gave voice, b) created ownership of role - "that's me," and c) created ownership of the play - "that's our play."

**Gave Voice:** The learners used the play to give voice to their life experiences and those of others. Often learner/actors said that they would not express words or sentences in the way that was done by the author. Therefore, the students would take the liberty to change the words to their own to reflect real situations. In fact, they took control of the language that had been written and revised by the playwright. Many learners could not read and in some cases memorize the lines, so they used the words closest to their own. This gave the learner/actors control over the dialogue and a creative vehicle for expressing words or emotions that had been hidden and bottled up for so long. As one man stated, "I've seen other people that were quiet start speaking up...for me, that's the most important thing in the play..." (HB-1). Another learner acknowledged that the play was a vehicle for her voice until she learned to communicate more effectively with others. She commented on the words of the play in this way: "(The play) gave them...weren't so afraid to say stuff. Gave them wider vocabulary. How they could express themselves. Most of us express ourself by getting angry, and you don't get anything across when you get angry because people get their back up and say, 'Forget it, I'm not listening to you.' It was using the play. Because you learn how in the play it's already written down for you, you don't have to really think about it. For you to think about things and put them into words and saying what you want to get across, a lot of times it gets mixed up half-way in between. You lose the point. Whereas in the play, it got straight to the point..." (LL-2).

**Created Ownership of the Role:** Many learners identified very closely with the roles, for they had often experienced the real life drama of their characters. Moreover, even the upgrading students developed ownership of their roles and were able to walk in the shoes of illiterates. Sometimes individuals would leave the play only to return to the role at a later time. As well, these individuals hesitated at taking on a new character, for they had already shaped and moulded their parts. For those who had lived illiteracy, the roles became even more personal as is reflected in the comments by a young woman: "(What bothers me is) knowing someone else is going to play my part. Because that's me. That's my part; that's a part of me, that's not just Bonnie. I don't think of that character as being Bonnie any more...That is me. That's exactly what happened to me. I've played (the part) for three years, but I played it before three years too. I didn't play it. That was me. That's what happened" (LP-4).

**Created Ownership of the Play:** Throughout the interview process, the term "OUR PLAY" was repeated over and over again by the performers in each of the five groups. As I explored deeper, I discovered most groups believed that the

play was theirs, for they owned it through the creative dialogue, creative collaboration, and sense of commitment they felt. Even more interesting was to watch the learner/actors as they found out that others felt exactly the same way as they did - "That's OUR PLAY." Generally, the learners were curious about the other groups. As well, a sudden realization would hit them as they thought about sharing it and admitting that perhaps other students were entitled to experience ownership. Even so, each group seemed to put their unique signature on Marks on Paper.

#### TRANSFORMATION/ACTION

When students were asked if their actions or views had changed after having performed in the play, initially many would respond negatively. Though, as I probed deeper, students stated that the play had acted as a catalyst in transforming their thinking or engaging them in new actions. The learners discussed a) change in meaning, b) catharsis, c) action, d) networking, and e) modelling for other learners.

**Meaning:** Often when I asked what meaning the play had for the learner/actors, they looked puzzled and said it did not mean anything. However, on closer reflection, many stated, as did one respondent, that "The subject material didn't have an impact on me at that time (when I first began performing)...it grew on me. I got sensitized through the audience" (LP-2).

**Catharsis:** Many literacy students related how some scenes brought back a flood of old often negative memories which engulfed them with a swirling storm of emotions. Maintaining composure was a major effort, for many did not want to disclose their turmoil even within the safe group. Thus, as adults, many described the play as having a cathartic effect for them on these old problems and memories. As one literacy learner said, "Some of the stuff was hitting a little too close to home. Some of the stuff I had heard before and I...was moved by it then and it had time to sink in..." (LL-2).

**Action:** Learners described new actions in a number of ways. For example, some said they had begun listening to programs about illiteracy or had become involved in community activities for promoting literacy awareness and fund raising events. Thus, the type of action varied greatly.

**Networking:** Networking was both personal and in the community. Personal networking by the learners included participating in social activities such as going to coffee or having picnics before or after rehearsals where the cast had fun and became acquainted on a more intimate level. Further, networking took on both a community and provincial flavour. For example, many learners got to know each other through yearly provincial learner events. Moreover, the play was a vehicle for networking with other Marks on Paper casts, for the learners had a common bond through the play.

**Modelling for Other Learners:** Through the new found self-confidence, self-esteem, voice, and empowerment, many learners began to take on the role of helping and modelling actions for other students. Many felt that if they had learned to read and write, gained confidence, or performed in a play that other learners too could experience and share these new successes, feelings, and actions. One woman made this quite clear when she told me that she had helped her husband's friend: "I think it was because of the play because I was able to stand out and say, 'Well, look. I can help you. I can give you these books and stuff. Where before I wouldn't have said anything if I hadn't have been involved with the play...I would have just minded my own business.... because of myself being shy and not well educated and so I figured, well, if I can do it, then he can do it too'" (LP-5).

#### SOCIO-EDUCATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Throughout the interviews the respondents continually reiterated their perceptions about learning and teaching. These were manifested in a) perceptions of learning and learners and b) perceptions of teaching and teachers.

**Perceptions of Learning and Learners:** Many of the literacy students had never heard the term illiteracy until they attended classes. Thus, they had never identified with the concept. They always thought of illiterate as someone else. As one learner said, "I didn't think I was one of them, I thought I was pretty smart myself. I knew things, but I just couldn't read them or write them down, but I knew a lot of things" (EK-2). Furthermore, many learners emphasized that learning did not have to come out of a book. They felt that people could learn by doing and watching and modelling others.

**Perceptions of Teaching and Teachers:** Often both literacy and upgrading students had negative memories of teachers. They felt anger, loss, and hurt by having been denied the pleasure of learning by traditional teachers who were sometimes unsympathetic to the students' learning difficulties. Many noted how different literacy and adult basic education instructors were. One learner captures this as she says: "(The teacher) takes time to teach you. And she realizes she's teaching adults; she's not teaching kids. She's at the same level; she's not only just a teacher but she's um...a counsellor. She's someone to talk to. She's a friend. And that's what a lot of literacy adults need is a friend. A friend that can teach them, but hasn't put themselves on a pedestal. Too many teachers put themselves on a pedestal..." (LL-2).

#### **IMPLICATIONS**

The findings of this research have implications for self-understanding, understanding others, raising awareness, problem-solving, teaching, and learning. The play provided the learner/actors with the opportunity to explore their performing capabilities, inter-personal skills, and perceptions of illiteracy in the classroom, informal settings, rehearsal, and public performance. This helped increase self-confidence in the learners. Also, the play was used as an instrument for learners to work in groups and to network with peers. Theatre can provide a voice for students to create dialogue, solve problems, and create awareness about illiteracy. Also, theatre encouraged students to work on their own behalf with professionals and the community to seek solutions for illiteracy.

These findings confirm that theatre can be used to raise awareness through critical reflection and problem solving so that we may all see that we are part of the greater universal of humanity. As Dorothy Heathcote (Wagner, 1976, p. 76) says, "The universal is the wellspring, the source, however, drama, like all art starts with a very carefully selected, precise and particular, unrepeatable instance--one that then acquires significance as it reverberates in the chambers of the universal."

Through Marks on Paper literacy and upgrading students had an opportunity to create art by mirroring the mundane realities of life. Theatre transforms everyday situations into art by allowing individuals to explore feelings, beliefs, attitudes, perceptions, and actions. All in all, performing in the play provided the learners with a vehicle for greater understanding of illiteracy, community involvement, self-understanding, and transformation while opening new doors for the learner/actors to improve their quality of life. Since I began working with this play in 1989, theatre has been used more and more to create awareness about social issues. However, when this play was written in 1979, it was well before its time. This research is only one attempt to express the impact that theatre can have on all of us. The impact of performing on marginalized adults is just beginning to be explored. More research through theatre is needed to capture those voices so that we may better understand ourselves in a democratic and caring society.

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Heuristic Research: A New Perspective  
on Research in Adult Education

by

Edward S. Beckstrom

ABSTRACT

The basic concepts and processes inherent in a heuristic search are presented and discussed with some exploration into the relevance of heuristic research for adult educators.

Overview

Heuristic inquiry is a process that begins with a question or problem which the researcher seeks to illuminate or answer. The question is one that has been a personal challenge and puzzlement in the search to understand one's self and the world in which one lives. The heuristic process is autobiographic, yet with virtually every question that matters personally there is a social--and perhaps universal--significance. Heuristics is a way of engaging in scientific search through methods and processes aimed at discovery; a way of self-inquiry and dialogue with others aimed at finding the underlying meanings of important human experiences. The deepest currents of meaning and knowledge take place within the individual through one's senses, perceptions, beliefs, and judgements. This requires a passionate, disciplined commitment to remain with a question intensely and continuously until it is illuminated or answered. (Moustakas, 1990. p. 15)

It was important to me to find a research methodology that would provide some structure for an in-depth exploration into my experiences of blocking and creativity. It was important that my investigation begin with me as an experiencing human being and not treat phenomena as being "out there" apart from my experiencing of them. For me, the heuristic research model suited these intentions.

The investigation I conducted had four purposes:  
(1) It was a search for understanding the meaning of blocking creativity as it had been experienced and



lived by me and by others. (2) It was an attempt to relate creativity to problem solving. (3) It was an attempt to relate creativity and problem solving to adult education. (4) Finally, it was an attempt throughout to demonstrate experimentally the heuristic research model as a viable methodology for research in adult learning and adult education.

### The Heuristic Process

Although heuristic inquiry is identified as a process, it is akin to a clustering of processes (self dialogue, indwelling, focusing, and dialogue with others). These processes are used to "tap into" one's knowledge be it tacit, intuitive or explicit, and are continually relating back to an internal frame of reference based on one's experiences, perceptions, thoughts, feelings, and senses. It is important to the understanding of the heuristic process that the concepts of self dialogue, tacit knowing, inverted perspective, intuition, indwelling and focusing are understood. The concepts of inverted perspective, indwelling, and intuition have their roots in the works of Henri Bergson, particularly in An Introduction to Metaphysics (1955).

### Self Dialogue

Self dialogue is encountering a phenomenon allowing the phenomenon to speak directly to one's own experience. Self dialogue recognizes that the starting point of all inquiry is within. The heuristic researcher probes and questions the self to identify what it is that makes up one's experience of a phenomenon. Openness and honesty are paramount for disclosure that is at the heart of the heuristic search.

### Tacit Knowing

Perhaps the single most important concept underlying the heuristic search is that of tacit knowing. Tacit knowing starts with the observation that we can know more than we can tell. (Polanyi, 1966) Tacit knowledge is made up of elements of perceptions that enter our conscious awareness. These elements attract immediate attention, are visible and can be described. But these elements attended-to are of secondary importance. There are those aspects of an experience that are unseen, are invisible and cannot be explicitly stated. Tacit knowing is "the capacity to sense unity or wholeness from an understanding of individual qualities or parts" (Moustakas, 1990, pp 20-21). This knowing is possible as the unseen aspects of the experience combine with the conscious elements of

the experience to form a whole.

#### Inverted Perspective

The inverted perspective is an attempt to achieve understanding of an experience by becoming one with the question. It is becoming one with what one is seeking to know. The intent is to move from looking at a phenomenon (which objectifies the phenomenon) to looking from the phenomenon to something else. "The moment you look at [a phenomenon] you cease to see its meaning" (Polanyi, 1969, p. 146). The inverted perspective is attending from a thing to its meaning.

#### Intuition

Intuition is the means through which the individual moves from observable factors to arrive at a knowledge of a whole. A link between the subsidiary, observed experience and the focal which is unseen and invisible, intuition enables one to draw clues, sense patterns, imagine relationships, to arrive at knowledge which is unattainable through direct observation. Intuition implies a resonance with the tacit dimension.

#### Indwelling

Indwelling is "the heuristic process of turning inward to seek a deeper more extended comprehension of the nature or meaning of a quality or theme of human experience" (Moustakas, 1990, p. 24). It is the returning again and again to one's experience of a phenomenon in order to grasp its fullness.

#### Focusing

As a process, focusing refers to "an inner attention of staying with a sustained process of systematically contacting the more central meanings of an experience" (Moustakas, 1990, p. 25). It is clearing an inward space in order to attend to the thoughts and feelings surrounding the question.

#### Heuristic Research Design Phases

There are six phases to the heuristic research design: initial engagement, immersion, incubation, illumination, explication, and creative synthesis. The development of the heuristic model has been essentially a result of the work done by individuals through the Center for Humanistic Studies in Detroit, Michigan, under the guidance of Clark Moustakas. The phases of a heuristic research model were developed by Moustakas (1990) and reflect a problem solving process. This is understandable for heuristics is problem solving. It differs from most perspectives and models of problem solving in that the other perspectives and models treat "problems" as "out there" and rely heavily on critical



thinking and analysis as if the problem existed as an object apart from the problem solver. The heuristic process seeks to find meaning in experiences recognizing that the answers are within the individual and need to be searched for there. As Polanyi states:

"...the capacity to know a problem is the most striking instance of our powers to integrate the meaning of a set of particulars by fixing our attention on a gap behind which we anticipate the presence of yet hidden knowledge (1969, p. 170).

#### Heuristics and Adult Education

In 1981 Leland Davies wrote "As an adult educator we must be willing to bring our whole person into the learning and allow experience--what we feel, what we care about, what we know, what we don't know, what we see and what we learn" (1981, p. 232). Understanding in the terms of knowledge acquisition or in the terms of meaning begins with one's lived experience. It is the focus on one's lived experience that heuristic research provides a significant contribution to adult education. Heuristic research is intimately connected to creativity and problem solving, both important in adult education, and it directly addresses what it means to be an adult. However, understanding heuristic research implies a certain perspective on what it means to be an adult. Defining "adult" by referencing social roles does not address what it means to be an adult. This is important to note. For if we limit our understanding of "adult" and "adult education" to social roles and a social perspective we will not be able to get the full import of the heuristic approach. We need to have another perspective on adults and adult education, one that is more compatible with the heuristic approach.

It is important to understand that adults are beings-in-the-world. Their present lives include past experiences and future expectations as well as the on-going rush of apprehensions that make up their lived-in world. It is this living-in-the-world experience of adults that adult education must address. But what makes "adult" education different or special? For this I begin by turning to R. D. Laing (1967):

As adults, we have forgotten most of our childhood, not only its contents but its flavor; as men of the world, we hardly know of the existence of the inner world: we barely remember dreams, and make little sense of them when we do; as for our bodies, we retain just sufficient proprioceptive

sensations to coordinate our movements and to ensure the minimal requirements for biosocial survival--to register fatigue, signals for food, sex, defecation, sleep; beyond that, little or nothing. Our capacity to think, except in the service of what we are dangerously deluded in supposing is our self interest and in conformity with common sense, is pitifully limited: our capacity even to see, hear, touch, taste and smell is so shrouded in veils of mystification that an intensive discipline of unlearning is necessary for anyone before one can begin to experience the world afresh, with innocence, truth and love. (p 26)

Laing goes on to say that, as adults, domains of experience become more and more remote to us and more and more difficult, as the remoteness increases, to even conceive of their existence. What, then, is considered "normal" is an existence that is "radically estranged from the structure of being" (1967, 27). The result of this estrangement is that this estrangement becomes "normal" and that alienation from this "normal" state is seen as bad or mad. This estrangement from our experiences has devastating consequences. As Laing states: "If our experience is destroyed, our behavior will be destructive" (1967, 28). More fundamentally, we have lost ourselves in the process. Given this perspective, I offer another definition of adult education for consideration:

adult education consists of those activities and actions that transform and empower persons through expanding the person's apprehension of and experience of their lived-in world.

The heuristic concepts and processes presented in this paper reflect an emphasis on one's lived experience as the basis of knowledge and understanding and it is this living-in-the-world experience of adults that adult education must address.

#### Personal Reflections

Heuristics is "a passionate and discerning personal involvement in problem solving, an effort to know the essence of some aspect of life through the internal pathways of the self" (Douglas & Moustakas, 1985, p. 39). As such, it is highly autobiographical and involves a sharing of autobiographical experiences focusing on a particular question. Based, in part, on

my efforts to do a heuristic study on the experience of blocking creativity, I make the following parting observations.

Heuristics involves a new way of knowing, a new way of seeing. It requires that one be open to and comfortable with the idea that "the deepest currents of meaning and knowledge take place within the individual" (Moustakas, 1980, p. 15) (emphasis added) and needs to be sought for there. For those with a more social perspective on knowledge this is a critical weakness to heuristics. Whether heuristics is a viable research tool in other cultures with less of an individualistic perspective is the question. This concern is a misreading of heuristics. The heuristic experience paradoxically enables the person to break the bonds of individualism and to come into touch with the universal. Being in touch with the human-ness of one's experience allows one to go beyond culturally specific constraints. It is my belief that it is the individual who experiences and that the individual nature of experience provides the only common denominator whereby cultural/social aspects of and influences on knowledge and meaning can be apprehended, accepted, and dealt with and a higher order consciousness can be attained. It is the individual's experience of living-in-the-world that a heuristic search addresses and it is this focus on experience that is central to adult education.

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**SELF-DIRECTION IN ADULT UNDERGRADUATES:  
PERCEPTIONS OF LEARNER CONTROL**

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*This exploratory case study employed qualitative interviews to examine selected aspects of self-directed learning as they were revealed within the context of the collegiate classroom.*

**Introduction, Design and Method**

Within the field of adult education there is a growing awareness that the phenomenon of self-directed learning must be conceptualized as multidimensional. Scholars are calling for further research into the phenomenon to promote conceptual clarity. Kasworm (1992) has urged that self-directed learning be considered "as an interactive set of knowledge, attitudes, values and behaviors of the individual in pursuit of purposeful self learning experiences within any environmental context." (p. 224).

This research assumes that self-directed learning is a process. Further, context is a significant component of the process and the learner's subjective interpretation of the learning event and context shapes the nature of the phenomenon. Autonomy, an essential aspect of self-direction is expressed in the learner's control of various aspects of the learning transaction.

American adults are found in increasing numbers in collegiate settings. The National Center for Educational Statistics has projected that the college enrollment of students 25 years of age and older will range from 6.4 to 7.6 million by the turn of the century. Since the formal setting is often assumed to be antithetical to self-directed learning, but has received little systematic investigation, this study chose the formal classroom as the context for the investigation. Further, little attention has been given to the adult learner's view of the formal setting. Thus the purpose of the study was to examine the adult undergraduate's perceptions of learner control in the formal educational setting.

This exploratory, descriptive study employed a qualitative case study design to investigate the experiences of adult undergraduates at two private, liberal arts institutions, both offering adult-degree programs. This report represents a first generation analysis of two sites with somewhat similar characteristics. Twenty adults were interviewed at each site. The interviews were semi-structured following a protocol. The study sought to understand the experience of those who had fully assumed adult roles



and had voluntarily chosen a formal program to meet specific learning objectives.

An initial pool of potential participants was identified by each institution. The pool consisted of those who were 30 years old or over, were currently enrolled and admitted to a degree program and had accumulated at least 60 hours of course credits. The study participants were drawn from the pool in order to capture the greatest diversity of experience available. Equal numbers of men and women were selected. Age and academic major were varied as much as possible. Following audio-taping, the interviews were transcribed and analyzed following the methods of Miles and Huberman (1984). Theoretical memos were developed at all stages of the analysis process. Data was analyzed in three rounds. Individual cases at each site were analyzed followed by a cross-site comparison.

Given that autonomy may be expressed in the choices one makes, the choices of these adults revealed that they exercised a great deal of control in all aspects of their learning transactions. They were self-directing in setting life goals and short range goals. They were also self-directing during learning episodes in order to achieve those goals.

#### Key Findings

**Choosing Formal Education.** In relationship to broadly conceived life goals, these adults chose a 'long range' course of action, to accomplish these goals. They then made short range choices in order to move toward the distant goal.

These adult learners initially exercised control over their learning by the decision to participate in a formal educational program. The selection of a formal program was most often related to life goals such as professional advancement, entry into an employment area that required specific knowledge or enhancement of self-esteem. Following the choice of the formal setting, these learners were active in investigating programs which would meet their individual needs in terms of learning goals and in terms of accessibility, according to the learner's life circumstances.

Subsequently choice was exercised in the commitment to a specific degree, the deliberate selection of a specific set of academic courses to achieve the personal goal of a degree. At this point the learner sometimes failed to find the desired match between his/her personal goals and the programs available. For example, one student chose a program although he preferred another because the preferred program was inaccessible. In such cases the long range goal was modified and short range goals took precedence in guiding learner choices.

**Ongoing Choices During Enrollment.** Having made the



above choices, the learner's autonomy was expressed on a continuing basis in two ways. At the "course" level, the learner made decisions to participate based on a number of factors. If the course content was personally interesting to the learner, there was a high degree of participation in the formal learning activities and interest in aspects of the content that were not a part of the classroom presentation. Adults in this situation went beyond the classroom to obtain additional resources to add to their knowledge of the subject. One study participant actively looked for a solution he desired and "recognized" it when the professor discussed a particular topic.

The second area where continuing choice operated was at the individual "class" level. Each time the class met, these adult undergraduates made choices to be active in the learning transaction or not and selected the degree to which they would be involved.

Learners also talked about altering their choices. When they encountered a required course they disliked, they began it with rote student behaviors, but attempts to understand the material sometimes "stretched" the student's horizons and this expansion was viewed as a positive experience which often reframed their perception of the content. Occasionally, there was a sense of surprise and discovery that the student had not anticipated that emerged during the progress of the course. They found unexpected enjoyment related to the content. The discovery then changed the student's approach from one of superficial involvement to one of active participation.

**Self-directed Goals and Objectives.** The goals these adults set at the outset of their degree program are often altered during the learning process. One objective may be chosen over another and alter the learner's actions. Conflicting goals demand that the learner select a course of action that may influence the degree of self directedness that may be exercised.

An example of shifting goals expressed by a number of study participants is captured in the view of one woman who stated "After I switched to ... my present company ... I could see where that [the degree] might help me advance in my job ... but now I think I want -- the reason I'm doing it is because I want to learn and I want the knowledge for myself, not to impress a future employer."

As adults who are competent in other life arenas, these learners sought to be competent in the academic arena as well. They often commented that they sought and preferred "all A's". However, they were willing to "settle for" a lower grade under certain circumstances in light of the overall goal of finishing a given program. The need to fulfill family and work related roles in spite of a desire to excel as a student

sometimes meant that the 'grade goal' could not serve as a guide for their learning efforts. Occasionally, there was the recognition that some content simply did not matter as much to them personally and was thus not worth the effort required for an A.

Sometimes, goals conflicted for these adults. There were those who desired the public credential of a high grade who nevertheless strongly desired to pursue their own areas of interest within the content. This meant that they had to choose between doing things that would result in a high grade, or taking their limited time and using it to pursue a personally interesting topic that was not "covered in class". Within this group of adults, the goal of achieving a public credential most often won.

**Learner control in the classroom.** During the interview, these undergraduate adults were asked if they would like to make decisions regarding the organization of a hypothetical course. With only two exceptions, all chose to be teacher directed rather than self-directed in the pedagogical aspects of the classroom.

The most frequent reason given for opting for teacher direction was a lack of epistemological autonomy. They basically said they could not control or direct what they knew nothing about. The study participants also recognized that the teacher played a key role in keeping classroom learning "on track". One woman's representative comment was that "I think I know enough about what makes me learn that I could possibly design my own course, but then again ... the teachers have been the ones who have gotten the process going." Another stated, "I think, it would depend upon what the class was that I was taking. If it was ... chemistry ... I can't learn that sort of think on my own. If it's something I was interested in, I think that it would be something I could learn on my own."

However, these adults do recognize the limitations the traditional formal classroom may place on their learning. One woman described her behavior in a traditional classroom that was a mixture of younger and older students by saying "if I had a question of something that occurred in my business background I felt kind of odd about asking that because I just didn't feel like a lot of the class would be able to relate to it and I didn't want to waste their time." Further, "a lot of that was just lecture learning ... it was not as interactive as an adult program is."

### Discussion

It is apparent that these adult learners perceive a high degree of psychological control within the formal learning setting. Their experiences in these two adult-degree programs are seen as valuable in

meeting a wide range of personal goals. Long (1989) has asserted that the psychological variable, or "degree to which the learner, or the self, maintains active control of the learning process" (p. 3) is the critical dimension of self-directed learning. In considering the actions of these adult undergraduates, the weight of the data suggests that they do in fact maintain self control of the majority of their learning transactions. Long (1989) further develops the idea of self-directed learning within the institutional framework. He calls such self-directed learning "pedagogical". This "emerges from the interaction of psychological control and pedagogical control." (p. 4) When the learner's psychological control is equal to or greater than the teacher's pedagogical control, Long considers the learning conditions to be self-directed.

The adult undergraduates in this study talked a great deal about their own voluntary choices and very little about the teacher's control of their choices or of learning activities. The one exception was in the area of testing. They perceived the teacher as the controller of this activity, but even here, they spoke of the 'reward' of doing well on a test. Thus the interaction of psychological and pedagogical control in these settings comes down on the side of the learner. Long (1989) would equate this with a self-directed learning experience.

The data from these interviews support Kasworm's (1992) concept of the adult as a "master planner" who chooses not only to create processes, but to actively participate in pre-defined processes of learning. The actions of these adults met their own expectations and complied with external institutional and cultural expectations. The majority sought to obtain specific knowledge, most often knowledge in the public domain. This learning objective meant that there was a need to select a means to achieve this end that was congruent with public domain knowledge. Formal education settings are the most appropriate choice given these circumstances. Once involved in the formal setting however, there was little evidence of subjugation to teacher control. The teacher's contribution was sought as a catalyst to individual learning, as a resource and as a representative of the publicly accepted knowledge. Choosing to align oneself with such representatives assured these adults that their knowledge would be of the type they desired.

As "master planners", these adults identified needs in their lives, framed the need in light of their varied life roles, and made the decision to meet the need through involvement in formal educational settings. Once they entered the formal setting, they continually sought information and used socially accepted and individually developed means for achieving

their short and long range plans. They were satisfied that their efforts were in fact leading them toward their goals. There was a good "match" between means and end.

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## CONSTRUCTING HIV AND MAGIC JOHNSON: DISCOURSE, EDUCATION AND POWER

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**Abstract:** The author analyzed the construction of Magic Johnson in the mainstream media, the gay press, the superpulp press and the black press. Five tropes emerged - heroic figure discourse, homophobia discourse, heterosexual titillation discourse, athletic promiscuity discourse, fallen hero discourse. Implications for education are described

### Introduction

Because mainstream educators have given little attention to HIV/AIDS many people learn "the facts" of AIDS from the popular press. Under normal circumstances public discussion concerning AIDS constitutes a kind of background noise that touches those who are directly concerned but largely bypasses the bulk of the population. However, revelations that surround the death or problems of prominent people (e.g. Rock Hudson, Freddy Mercury, Arthur Ashe, Liberace) seem to have a greater impact than the problems of "ordinary" citizens.

All fields have a widely-shared and taken-for-granted discourse involving *central concepts* purported to describe *reality*. The relevant linguistic unit is the *text*; the relevant sociological unit is the *discourse* - which is the result of specific material and social processes which are, in turn, part of larger social organizations and structures. Discourse thus represents one mode in which ideology is expressed. Discourse is never neutral; it always serves some interests more than others. For example, discourse shapes the quality of life for persons-with-AIDS, the type of care provided, the language of compassion and the framing of education about HIV/AIDS.

The way television producers, newspaper editors and others frame HIV/AIDS reveals much about their "understanding" and advice given during *prevention-education* campaigns is always nested in deeply rooted and socio-culturally determined ways of construing the world. AIDS-education and discourse is not neutral. Somebody's interests are always being served and both educators and consumers of AIDS-education might ask questions like: Who produced this knowledge about AIDS and why? Who contributed to the processes used to produce this "knowledge" and who benefits from these interpretations? Who is excluded and why?

AIDS is a social construct that influences peoples relationship to and ability to teach about "it". Secondly, although commendable *prevention-education* has occurred in formal and nonformal settings (see Boshier, 1990) much "knowledge" about HIV/AIDS is derived from informal educational settings, most notably those that involve use of the popular media. Newspaper editors, reporters and columnists and educators should be aware of various discourses concerning AIDS and lessen the unconscious or unintended reproduction of ways of thinking that hinder education or foster stereotypes (e.g. AIDS as a *gay plague*).

The way in which a community and its popular media respond to and discuss AIDS also reveals much about core cultural values and sexual ideology. In all discourse some elements are included; others are excluded. Thus, in northern countries AIDS discourse has largely depended on homophobic and racist constructions; in southern countries it has been attributed to foreign or supernatural forces. In Singapore it has been cast as an import



from the "degenerate west." Similarly, in Uganda there are sharp differences in the way the churches and the government control program construed AIDS ("Love Faithfully" - churches; "Love Carefully" - government) (Seidel, 1990). Discourse moulds individual attitudes, collective behaviour and social policy. It thus provides a framework within which public policy is set, priorities are established and resources allocated. It has an enormous impact on persons-with-AIDS, educators, care-givers and, in the Third World, will determine what happens to the large number of AIDS orphans. It also influences the solidarity of non-infected persons and the willingness of HIV-positive persons to cooperate with *prevention-education* programs. AIDS discourse can be empowering but also reinforces stigmas and social control.

### Prominent Persons

When an ordinary citizen becomes HIV positive it is largely a private matter. But when a media celebrity, rock, film star or other prominent person becomes HIV positive or dies from AIDS it can lead to a significant reshaping of AIDS discourse.

On June 2, 1984 Michel Foucault, who knew a considerable amount about discourse and the meaning of AIDS, fainted in his apartment on the Rue de Vagirard in Paris. He was taken to the hospital he had so vividly described in *Histoire de la folie*. Foucault was HIV positive, but like Rudolf Nureyev nearly a decade later, had told few friends, not even his lover (see Shilts, 1987, p. 472). Instead Foucault complained about the "nasty flu" that was impeding his work. On June 25, 1984 people were stunned by a news bulletin announcing "Michel Foucault is dead" (Eribon, 1991). In a tribute (published in *Le Monde*) Pierre Bourdieu noted that "Foucault's work is a long exploration of transgression, of going beyond social limits, always inseparably linked to knowledge and power" (Eribon, 1991, p. 328). But despite this, AIDS-activists resented Foucault's secrecy, just as they later berated Rudolf Nureyev for hiding his seropositivity. It is claimed that secrecy reinforces the notion of PWA's as "contaminated other."

In early 1985 both San Francisco daily papers and four television stations were tracking down rumours that film star Burt Reynolds was HIV-positive. His appearance on a studio lot at Burbank calmed rumours but gay columnist Allen White confided "'I don't want to hear that its not true. If we are to survive we need it to be true.'" White was alluding to the social dynamics, the "paradigm shift," the new discourse that would inevitably accompany emergence of another "risk-group" - the rich and famous (Shilts, 1987, p. 544).

Rumours concerning Reynolds were unfounded but on July 21, 1985 Rock Hudson fainted in a hotel foyer in Paris and was taken to the American Hospital where officials did not want their "good name associated with a gay disease, fearing they would lose both prestige and patients" (Shilts, 1987, p. 577). But for the popular press, Hudson's predicament seemed to signal that the "general population" was at risk. In *Ms. Magazine* Van Gelder (1986) observed that Rock Hudson was the "seeming epitome of Hollywood hetero hunkdom" and while he "humanized" (p. 36) the issue the subsequent media blitz made millions recognize that a scary epidemic was going on "right under their nose" (p. 36). For decades, Hudson had been among the "handful of screen actors who personified wholesome American masculinity; now, in one stroke, he was revealed as both gay and suffering from the affliction of the pariahs." Until recently, this was the "single most important event in the history of the epidemic" (Shilts, 1987, p. 579). Following the Rock Hudson revelations, public discussion took on a voyeuristic quality and dwelt on male homosexual practices and the exotic detail of blood-letting and other ritualistic practices in Africa. The point was that AIDS was now a threat to "all of us" and, within two years, *MacLeans* (August 31, 1987) ran a cover with an ominous black background and the headline "Aids and Sex ... The deadly plague of AIDS is spreading with frightening

swiftness (and) the panic level is rising." Although Rock Hudson had flown home and was dying behind the locked gates of his private Hollywood lifestyle he was constructed as "one of us" and, following his announcement, the popular press began running many stories of people who had become "innocent victims" of AIDS (see, for example, *Time*, January 25, 1988, "Plague of the Innocents").

Discourse, themes or tropes concerning HIV/AIDS are like waves landing on a beach. The impulse for each builds until it crests, breaks and dissipates into those that preceded it. However, old discourses never entirely disappear. Instead they are woven into new patterns involving emerging or newer ways of constructing AIDS. So, although the end of the *gay plague* discourse was signalled by the beginning of the *innocent victim* discourse that accompanied Rock Hudson's announcement it never entirely disappeared and, to this day, many people think of AIDS as a "gay disease" (Boshier, 1992).

### Is Johnson Magic ?

On November 7, 1991 U.S. basketball player and media celebrity Earvin (Magic) Johnson held a press conference to announce that he was HIV-positive and would devote himself to AIDS-education. The mainstream media immediately dwelt on Johnson's heroism, his heterosexuality, marriage and HIV as "his greatest challenge" (e.g. *U.S. News and World Report*, November 18, 1991). Johnson's announcement had an enormous impact on AIDS discourse and, within hours, mainstream media were preoccupied with "safer sex" (e.g. "Safer Sex," *Newsweek*, December 9, 1991, pp. 52-58.) and there was a sharp increase in calls to AIDS hotlines. However, this was not how the story was carried in the gay, superpulp or black press which serves different interests than mainstream publications like *Newsweek*. Moreover, in the weeks and months following Johnson's announcement, the story evolved and the tropes that surrounded the initial announcement were replaced by more differentiated and critical kinds of analysis.

### Purpose and Methodology

Mainstream, gay, superpulp and black media are important agents involved in informal education concerning HIV/AIDS and it is important that educators understand the differential constructions applied to the "objective facts" of the story surrounding Magic Johnson. The power of the media can be gauged from the fact Wright (1975) found that 89 percent of his study sample had read at least one magazine article on "health" during the time period surveyed. The purpose of this paper was to trace the differential constructions of HIV and Johnson employed by (i) mainstream newsmagazines (ii) the gay press (iii) the superpulp press (iv) the black press, that followed Johnson's announcement concerning his HIV status.

The author<sup>1</sup> assembled materials from the four sources and then critically analyzed the text and discourse, the "construction" of Johnson after the November, 1991 announcement. Data - in the form of photographs, magazine covers and quotes from newstories - were arrayed in a 4 x 5 matrix where, in the horizontal dimension, were displayed the four types of press (mainstream, gay, superpulp, black press) and in the vertical dimension the five tropes that permeated the construction of Johnson. The author cannot guarantee that all words written about Johnson were collected and, at the time of writing, the issue was still being dissected. But, at the time of writing, there were 200-300 items in the "Magic Johnson bibliography" compiled by two assistants. By May, 1992 the superpulp press had made Magic into a mainstay item - like Elvis sightings, Elizabeth Taylor, the British royal family

<sup>1</sup> Thanks are due to Nikola Marin who assisted in the early phases of this work and Kevi Remple who secured needed material and created a bibliography and classification system to handle the data in the latter stages.

and extraterrestrials. We searched second hand bookshops, contacted the Florida publishers of the main superpulp papers, searched the CD-ROM system at the UBC library and recruited students and others to search magazines for mention of Johnson.

## RESULTS

Immediately after Johnson's announcement and interview with Arsenio Hall he was constructed as *hero*. By the time this paper was written in January, 1993 the dominant trope concerned Magic, the *fallen hero*. Five tropes have permeated discourse concerning Johnson.

**1. Heroic Figure Discourse:** Immediately following the announcement Johnson was variously portrayed as the "perfect" spokesman for HIV/AIDS. He was eulogized, deified and praised as being a person with seemingly boundless energy and an ability to communicate with black and white people, old people and youth. The (superpulp) *Sun* (December 17, 1991) said God's hand was at work through this "gifted athlete." The *Chicago Tribune* was breathless in its admiration. "In Magic Johnson, the war against AIDS has a new volunteer, a superb spokesman, a fresh hope, a peerless teacher, an almost mystic symbol" (Fumento, 1992, p. 16). As Fumento (1992) sarcastically noted "to hear the media tell it, Johnson's announcement has replaced JFK's assassination as the event people will recall thirty years from now." In some respects *Sports Illustrated* (November 18, 1991) scooped the other newsmagazines and the five stories in their "Magic" issue became the fulcrum around which other media outlets constructed their first accounts of Johnson's dilemma. The November 18, 1991 cover of *Sports Illustrated* had a photograph of Johnson and one word - "Magic." The cover graphics and layout reinforced Johnson's stardom, his superpower qualities that put him above the "rest of us." Five stories were devoted to Johnson - "I'll deal with it", "Unforgettable", a story about Johnson the "outsized paragon of style and grace" (heroic discourse), "Dangerous Games", about "pro athletes (who) remain sexually promiscuous despite increasing peril", "Like One of The Family" - "Magic's shocking announcement was, for many people, the first time the AIDS epidemic really hit home", "For Kids Only" - "designed to try and help younger readers understand the unsettling news regarding Magic." In one example of excess a magazine wanted "Magic As President" (*People*, December 30, 1992, p. 40). Magic as hero was most clearly exemplified on the January, 1992 "special" issue of *Life* magazine where he occupied half the cover; General Schwarzkopf, Anita Hill, Elizabeth Taylor, Jodie Foster, Harry Reasoner and an anonymous US soldier all shared the remaining space. If *Life* portrayed Magic's heroism in pictures, *Newsweek* ("Smile, Though Our Hearts Are Breaking," November 18, 1991, p. 70) created a similar image in words. According to them "There's no gender gap, there's no age gap, there's no race gap in Magic's ability to inspire affection. All of this points to a uniquely multidimensional figure. *Magic is larger than life* (emphasis added) - in physical size, in the range of his talent, in the fame and money and status he's achieved ...." (p. 70). As Jack MacCallum noted in *Sports Illustrated* ("Unforgettable," November 18, 1991, p. 28) Magic is "an outsized paragon of style and grace."

**2. Homophobia Discourse:** From the outset there were questions about his sexual orientation and strenuous attempts by Johnson and his handlers to deny any "homosexual encounter" (*Sports Illustrated*, November 18, 1991). The discourse was not as homophobic as some earlier public discussions but the magnitude of the disavowals reinforced the stigma associated with the "old" discourses of "contaminated other" or "gay plague." Significantly, when Johnson appeared on the Arsenio Hall television talk show the audience applauded when he told the interviewer he had never had a "homosexual contact" (see "The Importance of Being Earvin," *The Advocate*, April 21, 1992, p. 37). This "distancing" reinforced the discourse of stigmatization that insulates the "untouched from the untouchable" (Epstein, 1988). The overriding concern in the gay press was with



Johnson's future role. In the *Advocate* ("Johnson Disclosure Brings Aids Issues to Middle America," December 17, 1991, p. 16), gay activist Randy Shilts asserted that Johnson "will play the most constructive role if he gets political. He needs to rock the boat." The gay press also covered Martina Navratilova's article in the *Montreal Gazette* (see *Angles*, January 1992, p. 1) where she said that "... if I had the AIDS virus would (there) be understanding? No, because they'd say I'm gay--I had it coming. If it had happened to a heterosexual womyn who had been with 100 or 200 men, they'd call her a whore and a slut and the corporations would drop her like a lead balloon." Martina's response typified the deconstruction of Johnson's announcement that characterized coverage in the gay press. Richard Rouillard scrutinized the heroic representation of Johnson in the December 17, 1991, editorial in the *Advocate* (p. 9), "Will Magic Play into the Second Decade of the Republican Party's Successful Aids strategy?" - which, in his view, concerned the trivialization of HIV/AIDS through compassionate lip service to "innocent" victims like Magic Johnson. Although *Angles* also focussed on this discursive, potentially hysteria-creating tendency to personify the disease, in general the gay press endorsed Magic's heroic role, but with many qualifications. Which groups stood to gain or lose as a result of this latest chapter in the HIV/AIDS story? Would this signify a perpetuation of 'othering' practices?

**3. Heterosexual Titillation Discourse:** Johnson's disavowal of homosexuality lead to an energetic pursuit of details concerning his heterosexual preoccupations. The superpulp press manifested considerable delight at Johnson's disavowal of homosexuality and soon settled into "heterosexual titillation." For example, the (superpulp) *Globe* cover story of January 21, 1992 headlined "Magic's Secret Orgy With 20 Women !" Although this theme was linked to his athletic promiscuity (Trope 4) it was preoccupied with aspects of Johnson's sexual behaviour, the long shadow cast over his honeymoon in Hawaii with wife Cookie, the alleged history of promiscuity and allegations about having fathered two children ("Star Finds Magic's Secret Daughter," *Star*, December 17, 1991, p. 1). Photographs showed the dejected Johnson and his wife Cookie sitting at the side of a hotel swimming pool in Hawaii. On December 3, 1991 the *Star* ("Tears and Joy on Magic's No-Sex Honeymoon") carried an "on-the-spot" report of their "no-sex" pact. A week later the *Globe* claimed that "soap sex siren Emma Samms" had ended her marriage because of her husband's jealousy of Magic Johnson and other lovers ("Emma's Marriage Ends After Just 8 Months", *Globe*, December 10, 1991, p. 15). By December 17 the *Star* ("Magic's Wife Moves Downstairs") expanded the titillation discourse with revelations about Magic's secret child ("I Just Want to Tell My Dad: I Love You," *Star*, December 17, 1991, p. 37) and the difficulties created for Cookie, the woman he had married just months before the HIV announcement. Most of the coverage in the superpulp press was nested within the titillation discourse.

**4. Athletic Promiscuity Discourse:** There was a considerable preoccupation with Magic's sexual prowess. This discourse, most pronounced in the superpulp press, focussed on the following elements - Johnson as a black stud of unparalleled sexual power, somewhat comparable to Wilt Chamberlain (another basketball star) who claimed that he had slept with 20,000 women during his career - equivalent to 1.2 women in every day of his career ("Could Wilt really Count That High ?", *MacLeans*, November 18, 1991). At the centre of this discourse was the notion that sports stars and celebrities enjoy unrivalled access to easy sex as they flit from partner to partner or take the easy-pickings from the groupies that surround them. Their libidinous qualities are bound up with their strength, prowess and agility. This discourse also centred on the fact "boys will be boys" and sow "wild oats." There was a sense that athletes have always been like this, that women are the chief vectors of HIV and other maladies and not much can be done about it. There is a "nudge, nudge, wink, wink" inevitability about the linkage between athletic and sexual prowess. Thus, an athlete quoted by *Sports Illustrated* ("Dangerous Games", November 18, 1991, p. 43) said

women that hang around athletes "don't want safe sex. They want to have your baby, man, because they think that if they have your baby, they're set for life ... because if they had a life, they wouldn't be hanging around the hotel."

**5. Fallen Hero Discourse:** At first Johnson was largely constructed as hero but as more "facts" concerning his seropositivity and life on the road, and as HIV-positive women made accusations about him, he increasingly became constructed as a *fallen hero*. The first version of this trope emerged shortly after the appearance on the Arsenio Hall show. "Sorry, but Magic Johnson Isn't a Hero" said a headline in the *New York Times* (November 14, 1991), "What About Victims of our Safe-Sex Hero?" asked *The Vancouver Province* (November 20, 1991, p. A16) where Magic was accused of ignorance and arrogance. Others noted that while Magic had changed the way in which HIV-positive people were viewed he had "missed the consequences of excess" ("The Last Pass of Magic Johnson, *Esquire*, February, 1992, p. 52). An elaboration of the *fallen hero* trope emerged around November, 1992. At the centre were questions about who gave the virus to whom and whether he could infect other NBA players. In all these stories the authors and headline writers ignored the fact Johnson was HIV positive but not suffering from AIDS. "Magic Gave Me Aids - Young Mom's Own Story" announced the cover of the *Globe* (November 24, 1992, p. 1) and inside the story claimed "Tragic Magic Gave Me Aids" (*Globe*, November 24, 1992, p. 8). There was also the "Surprising Truth About Woman Who Claims Magic Gave Me AIDS" (*National Enquirer*, November 24, 1992, p. 24) who was alleged to be a "churchgoing college grad. who'd had sex with only two men." Then there were the "Worried Wives (who) Forced Magic to Quit" (*National Enquirer*, November 17, 1992, p. 20). The former hero and his wife were now getting phone calls from "the scared and angry wives of other players ... besieging the hoop wizard" to quit (p. 20). The other part of the trope was that Johnson was up to his "old tricks". "Girls Galore for Magic: Star with AIDS goes wild in Las Vegas as wife stays home with the baby" (*National Enquirer*, December 1, 1992, p. 24) was constructed around photographs of Johnson posing with "costumed dancers." The *Enquirer* claimed Johnson and a "mystery blonde in a pink dress" had walked to a penthouse elevator and disappeared for a few hours. "An unidentified 'friend' claimed 'Magic hasn't changed a bit. He's still chasing girls - and the girls still love him' (p. 25). Much of the gentleness in the earlier heroic constructions had subsided and Johnson was now experiencing "the kind of discrimination people with HIV experience every day" ("Johnson Quits: Players Fears Force Lakers Star to Give Up Game", *Vancouver Province*, November 3, 1992, p. B5).

The five tropes were differentially constructed by the four sources. We created a Likert-type scale that distinguished "No" from "Little", "Much" and "Considerable" emphasis. Table 1 which, along with the references, will be distributed at the conference, shows the four types of media and the extent to which, over time, they nested coverage of Johnson's situation within the five tropes discussed above.

### Implications for Education

There were significant differences in the way the four sources constructed Johnson. Whereas the initial constructions dwelt on Magic as *hero* the most recent portrayed him as *fallen hero*. These results have immense implications for education. First, they demonstrate that HIV/AIDS is both a social construct and a disease. Secondly, in at least one trope, women were blamed and, in the *heroic figure* discourse, there was a notable absence of concern for how Johnson may have contributed to his problem. Finally and most importantly, although these celebrity discourses constitute a "teachable moment," these events are invariably cast so as to serve some interests better than others. As such, adult educators interested in power and ideology should be alert to the various texts and subtexts nested within the growing discourse involving celebrity personifications of HIV/AIDS.



HOMEBOYS: A STUDY OF PEER-MENTORING AMONG  
AFRICAN-AMERICAN MALES  
IN CHICAGO IN ADULT EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

*The purpose of this paper is to describe the process of peer-mentoring among urban black males and its' effect on their socialization and educational patterns.*

The purpose of this paper is to describe a group of African American men from the west side of Chicago who, as a group, call themselves "homies." This research attempted is to describe communication and bonding processes of this group of homies who are often considered dangerous to, and outside of, the dominant white culture. This is a study of the layers of peer-mentoring, which is the process homies use to assure the passage of knowledge within their group and between their group and other groups.

The homies of this study resided in the Austin neighborhood located on the west-side of Chicago. Austin has a very interesting history. " Until 1960 Austin was virtually an all-white community, various European-descended ethnic groups-Italians, Irish, English, Scots, and European Jews-residing in the brick bungalows, duplexes, and two flats found there. In the last 20 years, however, the racial composition of Austin has changed dramatically, as the community has become three-fourths black." (McDowell, 1984, p. 66)

This ethnic change was significant because it led to a host of problems. These included lack of desire to integrate among the whites, the shifting of resources from local schools, the lack of maintenance of home and apartment buildings (particularly those units owned by absentee landlords), the practice of unscrupulous real estate companies who manipulated racial fears and tensions for profit, the lack of understanding between the police and the new residents and the delivery of city services to the rapidly changing and expanding population of Austin. The casualties of this era included many of the children. These children would grow up to be homies.

This study used ethnographic methods of participant observation, informal and formal interviewing and other unobtrusive methods of data collection over an eight year period. I followed a group of homies which numbered between thirty and fifty

and had a central core fluctuating between five to ten individuals. They were my associates. I was a "homie-in-training" or the "observer." At no point was I a full fledged homie in this group. I spent a considerable amount of time with them, mostly during the summer months. During this time I took ample notes and asked questions on a range of different subjects in an attempt to understand their culture, as well as my own. I was very careful not to insult the homies nor to appear uninformed.

There were several group characteristics that evolved during the data collection and analysis phase. For the purpose of this paper I will only discuss four of the more important characteristics. First, the homies saw themselves being typecast as either unemployable or difficult to employ. They believed that they were discriminated against because of their skin color. The unspoken rule was "the white man will always be paid more than the brother." This perception was further exaggerated by the homies' behaviors outside of the working world. For example, many were or had been involved with dealing controlled or other illegal substances. In addition, they "gang banged" or were affiliated with a gang or they participated in other illegal activities. In addition, most lacked formal education past the tenth grade. Their non-traditional methods combined with a lack of skilled labor experience provided few occupational opportunities. I believe that this created a low expectation of what the homies believed they could get out of life on a professional level. They were very clear that clothes (threads), shelter (crib) and someone to love (a female) were priorities in their lives. The homies realized that the way to acquire these priorities depended heavily on their job (gig).

Second, the homies expressed that they were typically placed in one of two groups: either the "dangerous Black male" or the "safe Negro." They felt both were inaccurate and extreme. They gained a certain level of mental strength in their ability to operate at either of those extremes. The homies felt and expressed that the safe Negroes would be acceptable to society, but at the cost of losing their identity and the culture of the street or the "hood." This would be a clear example of "selling out." The dangerous Black male image was equally as confining, especially as it related to employment. If potential employers perceived them as threats to the workplace, they would not be hired. This was especially harmful for those homies who were trying very hard to stay in legitimate society.

Third, there was an absence of traditional mentors, as described by legitimate society. Many of the homies indicated that older or more experienced individuals provided guidance. Usually this person was their mother or grandmother. The homies often looked to the older homies with experience for advice. The type of advice varied from homie to homie. If the homies needed information on illegal activities, they could find someone to provide the information. If the homies needed someone who would tell them the vices of gang-banging and the virtues of employment and being a good citizen, they could probably find someone who had that perspective. A few of the homies were strongly influenced by sports figures, political-entertainment figures (rap artists) or local "hustlers" (con men). The undercurrent that these individuals provided seemed to be fast money and beautiful women. There were few academic mentors for the homies because many of the homies did not have healthy experiences at school and hence believed school to be negative and useless. As a consequence, anything academic or school related was for "sissies" or the weak. There were instances where homies would physically abuse men who seemed to be too "book smart." The homies would even brag about beating up men that looked like nerds. It is not clear that this is an example of low academic self-confidence and inadequate academic preparation or if the homies see it

as, "If I can't have it, then it's bad and I reject it." If this was a form of rejection, then it seemed to be a reflection of the homies strong self-concept. The homies simply invalidated the experience when they encountered situations that were inconsistent with their reality.

Fourth, the hierarchy of homie culture and their socialization mimic larger socialization patterns in American society. In other words, those with the most money have the most power and influence over their peers. The homies at the bottom of the pyramid must, literally, fight their way to the top. The homies' success depended heavily on their allegiances. The homies who wanted to make money with drugs knew the right people to know and the right people to defend. These decisions would stay with the homies while they remained in the neighborhood. Homies were defined by their choices; they would have to remain loyal to the people they chose to cultivate as friends and those they defend.

These characteristics bore out the following four themes: (1) "I am who you're not" - the culture that gets defined becomes the one that is controlled; (2) "The 'Hood is my real home" - the homies rarely travel physically or mentally from the confines of their neighborhood; (3) "We are alone together" - the homies have maintained and supported their roles as social outcasts; (4) "We can't and if we could we don't know how" - the homies have created a culture that isolates them from society as well as denies them the tools to adequately fight the system.

I am who you are not. Society taught them that proper English is required. They, however, decided to create their own language and used it as a tool to exclude groups they chose to exclude. They altered the pitch of their voice, slurred words and phrases together, created slang words, and punctuated their speech with affirmations and abbreviated words that had not been shortened before. The homies sought to distinguish their communication patterns beyond a reasonable doubt. Society told them that foreign cars or small cars were better, so they decided to buy large American cars. They personalized and embellished their cars with nicknames like "Mack Love" or "Big Time." Society told them that school would help them get ahead, so they deduced that school was not important. When they encountered someone who talked about the benefits of education they would simply point out the fact that a education did not necessarily mean a job if you were black. They knew it was difficult to "make it in the white man's world." They would always be "black" first and that fact was negative in mainstream society.

When society gave them messages of success and power the homies responded in their own way. They joined gangs like The Vice Lords or The Disciples, sold drugs or forced their girlfriends into prostitution. It was through these activities that the homies saw themselves as being powerful and successful. They knew they were powerful because people were scared of them and the little boys and girls in the neighborhood wanted to emulate them. They clearly knew that getting a legitimate job at or near minimum wage was not the way to make a lot of money. And besides, they believed that certain persons in the government and in the government of other countries benefitted from selling drugs and people, but because those people were part of the dominant culture they went virtually unpunished. This sent a message to the homies that what they did followed the same tradition.

The hood is my real home. The homies felt that their neighborhood was "real." It was life on the streets. It was not the suburbs where people were bland and empty. Those "non-city" people were generic. The homies felt that they did not understand the significance of the gritty urban environment. The "city streets" taught the homies

essential survival skills. They believed this knowledge helped them adjust to any environment. They learned to survive on the westside of Chicago and they learned things that could not be taught in any book or learned on any suburban street. They were very comfortable with the level of excitement and danger that was ever present and this danger served as a constant reminder that life was worth living. The homies were very loyal to their neighborhood.

We are alone together. Homies knew that they were not "safe Negroes." In other words, they did not act or speak like the black men who wore the "suits." They saw these individuals as selling out, which meant submerging their identity as black men in order to work for the white man. The homies felt that selling out should not be a viable option to keep a job. This sentiment would be conveyed in conversations where the homies would refer to anyone that was not conversant in "street talk" or being able to survive on the street as being "soft." This was a very disparaging statement and probably the second worst insult. The worst insult was to say something negative or derogatory about a homies mother. In both cases, these insults were explicit provocations and if the homie that was insulted did not defend his honor or the honor of his mother he would be labeled a "punk" and ostracized from the group.

The message of maintaining black male homie culture was one of meeting the physical challenges of the street and the antagonism that accompanied it in addition to the psychological pressures of existing in a racist society.

We can't and if we could we don't know how. The homies felt that they had been shortchanged in life but that they had adjusted fairly well. They knew there were other kinds of lifestyles available but they knew very few people that could provide those other perspectives. The homies learned to survive. The traditional paths to success, for example school, had not been fruitful and therefore could not be legitimate. Their feeling of isolation and exclusion gave them strength and courage. They felt there must be something about them which compelled society to spend so much time "keeping them down" and forcing them "to have to watch their back, twenty-four, twenty-four." The homies were consistently looking for attention. Unfortunately, the attention they received was often in the form of negative criticism from local residents.

Understanding these generalizations and themes can provide some insight into addressing the problems of absence among black males in education and in adult education. It is clear that the homies have used non-traditional paths to acculturation and assimilation and believe they have adequately adapted. These homies exist on the periphery of mainstream society yet believe they are resisting mainstream society. This idea has been documented by several adult educators, Friere (1970) and Glasgow (1980) This position traps the homies, and does not empower them.<sup>1</sup> As long as they decide not to engage society directly and demand that existing educational and occupational institutions meet their needs, neither group will change. This process could be the quickest route to meaningful dialogue. Whyte (1981) and Willis (1978) arrived at similar conclusions with their research on Italian-American and British youth, respectively.

This research suggests that homies are comfortable and very aware of their social status. They have found their niche in their culture and have not searched for tools to create social or educational change in the larger society. In short, the perceptions

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<sup>1</sup> Paulo Friere, Pedagogy of the Oppressed New York: The Continuum Publishing Corp., @1970



they have of themselves are their only reality. The homies upgrade their job skills only when they believe it is necessary, and not because society (anyone outside of their circle) insists that they should. Their decisions are based on opportunities they have access to and knowledge of. They participate in educational programs when they feel the program will directly benefit them, not because "society" tells them that getting an education is the way out of the ghetto.

In other words, the homies have created their own society and class values within a larger society. This society was one of necessity, propelled by lack of choices. The exclusion and isolation of the homies from mainstream society empowered them to create their own. The homies felt that they suffered because of their historical exclusion and isolation from society which was compounded with neglect. They accepted their position as being "on the outside" of white culture because that's the way it is. They believed that acquiring formal education would not necessarily free them from the constraints of the ghetto. Where would they be able to live and feel just as comfortable if they were able to get out of the ghetto? The homies believed that having role models were important as they decided on making career decisions. They also knew the benefits of having a mentor in their life and many used their peers in this manner. The homies questioned the utility of using such models and mentors when larger issues of limited employment and educational opportunities had not been addressed. Finally, the homies questioned the effectiveness of infusing the community with financial resources without dealing with the on-going problems of racism.

As homies seek entrance to the educational arena it is the responsibility of the innovative adult educators to provide legitimate and non-traditional forums to address their concerns and equip the homies with the educational tools for personal and occupational change. And there are no easy answers or standard suggestions in attempting this task. It will require work and patience from both the homies and the educators and it will be a long process. But we should not overestimate the importance that education will play in this effort. Friere (1987) perhaps sums up the importance of education the following way, "Precisely because education is not the lever for the transformation of society, we are in danger of despair and of cynicism if we limit our struggle to the classroom. What we have to do, I think, from the very beginning of our experience as teachers, is to be critically conscious of the limit of education. That is, to know that education is not the lever, nor to expect it to make the great social transformation" (p 129).

#### CONCLUSION

Based on the themes, three propositions for action became evident. These are (1) the need for mentoring for the homies, (2) the homies must be encouraged to get involved with the local elementary schools and (3) the re-generation of teaching for social change.

**Mentoring** It was clear that homies use mentoring all of the time. The adult educators must work to extend the uses of mentoring beyond the homies' circles. There seems to be some effort in the community, but it is not adequate. This will be a very difficult, but not impossible task. Many of the homies are starving for academic attention, but often their opportunities are limited. The notion of learning to get a better paycheck must be supplemented by learning to move towards self-improvement. Many of the rap artists share in the push for teenagers to improve their minds and think for themselves.

**Education** It is clear that the homies understand the limitations of elementary education. Many of them managed to struggle through school. They faced problem

after problem and can sympathize with the elementary students of today. One strategy to address the problems of the urban children and create a sense of power among the homies would be to involve them in the educational process. The Chicago Public School System has placed the governance of each school in the hands of local school councils. The homies could petition to join these local councils and provide input. This would provide a forum to discuss the issues homies had while they were in school and work on solutions to those problems. Their involvement will send a clear message to the educators and the children that education is important. It is a win-win proposition for all involved.

**Social Change** The homies believe that the educational system has failed them, and that education per se will not solve their problems. The responsibility rest on the adult educators who want to help these men. These adult educators must vigorously use existing programs to meet the current needs of existing client bases. In other words, the practitioners in the field must listen and recognize that the homies know the answers to their problems. Adult educators must instill a clear image of civic and personal responsibility in these individuals. The homies must be assured that they do have power, the right to vote, the ability to complain for change, in this society, as citizens and that these rights are protected under the law. The homies must acquire a level of consciousness that will force them to demand change in their lives. The homies must actively force society to rethink and re-examine its values and commitments the same way society had to adjust for their parents during the Civil Rights Movement.

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## The Commodification of Adult Education

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**Abstract:** This paper discusses the consequences of cultural commodification for emancipatory adult education, arguing that while cultural commodification may generate a greater demand for adult education such market-driven programming will be stripped of any emancipatory potential.

### Introduction

We have entered an age that is marked by a crisis of power, patriarchy, authority, identity, and ethics. This new age has been described, for better or worse, by many theorists in a variety of disciplines as the age of postmodernism. (Giroux, 1992, p. 39).

One of the most dramatic developments taking place in what Giroux (1992) describes as "the age of postmodernism" is the commodification of culture. To an unprecedented degree, cultural artifacts, such as, works of art, knowledge, health and fitness, romance, and travel are being bought and sold in the marketplace. The production of culture has become so lucrative that some of the world's largest corporations have adopted it as their main preoccupation. Transnational corporations now generate significant profits through their control of such cultural institutions as television networks, newspaper chains, film studios, and publishing houses.<sup>1</sup> The commodification of culture is now such that many musicians, entertainers, and athletes have developed corporate identities that rival or surpass their cultural ones.<sup>2</sup>

Cultural commodification, however, is not restricted to the realms of art and entertainment, even the once hallowed space of education and the sacrosanct sphere of knowledge is being commodified. Once a stock of interpretations, narratives, and explanations carried within cultural traditions that were passed down through a process of socialization and enculturation, knowledge is rapidly being transformed into a commodity that can be quickly produced and rapidly exchanged on the open market. This paper contends that while this process may well create a greater demand for adult education programs, such market-driven programs will be stripped of any emancipatory potential.

### The Cultural Practices of Adult Education

If we interpret the term "culture" in the broad, anthropological sense of Raymond Williams (1958), that is, as "a whole way of life," a way of life "which expresses certain meanings and values not only in art and learning, but also in institutions and ordinary language" (Williams, cited in Hebdige, 1976, p. 6), then it becomes apparent that adult education has always been a cultural practice. As a social activity that aims to foster learning, adult education emerges out of and draws upon the symbolic realm of culture. Within such cultural realms, social realities are constructed, realities that allow the members of a particular culture to make sense of and share their lived experiences. Adult education draws upon such world views to communicate ideas and coordinate action. As such, adult education is a *rational* cultural practice: it offers justifications and reasons that "make sense" to support what it prescribes. But just as reasons can be offered in favour of

<sup>1</sup>For an interesting account of corporate ownership of television networks, see Douglas Kellner's, *Television and the Crisis of Democracy* (1990). Sut Jhally provides an interesting account of the involvement of corporations in daily newspapers and the film industry in *The Political Economy of Culture* (1989). Michael Apple discusses the involvement of major corporations in the publishing industry in *Teachers and Texts* (1986).

<sup>2</sup>Consider, for instance, the multi-million dollar contracts of rock stars like Madonna, TV personalities like Bill Cosby, or athletes like Herbie Puckett.

a particular course of action, so too can reasons be offered against a course of action. Consequently, adult education holds the potential to help adults formulate rational arguments cultural norms that are oppressing them.

### The Formal Subsumption of Culture

Not all cultures have need of adult education programs, however. Traditional or pre-modern cultures, for example, did not require adults to be further educated because the processes of socialization and enculturation fully prepared the young for the roles they would undertake in that "way of life." The stable and unquestioned cache of meanings, norms, roles, explanations, and institutions that comprised traditional culture provided the means for social reproduction, including the production and distribution of wealth, the maintenance of social solidarity, and the legitimation of social relations. Such cultures did not require cultural practices to supplement those of socialization and enculturation. Consequently, adult education did not flourish in such contexts. With the advent of modernity, however, pre-modern forms of association were dramatically transformed. Marx, who held that "capitalism is modernity and modernity capitalism" (Sayer, 1991, p. 12) offers a sobering account of this transformation:

Constant revolutionizing of production, uninterrupted disturbance of all social conditions, everlasting uncertainty and agitation distinguish the bourgeois epoch from all earlier ones. All fixed, fast frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify. All that is solid melts into air. (Marx, 1848, in Kamenka, 1983, p. 207).

Following in Marx's footsteps, Jürgen Habermas (1975, 1984, 1987) offers an insightful analysis of this change. He contends that while social actions in traditional societies are governed by the prescriptions of culture, in modernity certain realms of social action, most notably those contributing to the production of wealth and the distribution of power, split away from the larger cultural context to form semi-autonomous realms of action coordination. Modern society, he argues, is thus comprised of two interacting yet "uncoupled" social realms: the *lifeworld*, a realm where action continues to be coordinated by cultural and communicative means; and the *system*, a realm where action is coordinated by forms of ratiocination that develop around the need to accumulate money and power. Neither of these realms, however, can exist independently of the other. On the one hand, the lifeworld requires the productive capacities and the administrative accomplishments of the system to provide for its material and organizational needs; on the other, the system relies on the capacities of the lifeworld to provide labour power, consumers, taxes, and mass loyalty. None of the latter, however, exist in the abstract; they are integrated elements of the lifeworld's culture. Consequently, the system, in order to ensure its continued existence, is forced to justify its needs. It must do this by offering justifications that "make sense"—rational arguments—to the members of the lifeworld.

Marx was the first social theorist to realize that the capitalist system does not employ abstract labour power but complete human beings who are born and raised within a cultural context, and that labour power, a fundamental and inseparable part of every human being, was abstracted in the capitalist labour process and transformed into a commodity to be sold on the marketplace.<sup>3</sup> Marx's primary concern, however, was to reveal how the commodification of labour was, in itself, sufficient to mystify the exploitive relations that lay at the base of capitalism. Consequently, Marx neither focused on the symbiotic relationship between system and lifeworld, nor the degree to which the

<sup>3</sup>See Marx's (1977) analysis of how labour is embodied in the commodity form in his first chapter of *Capital*, Vol. 1.



capitalist system might be compelled to intervene in the lifeworld's culture in order to guarantee its own continued existence.<sup>4</sup>

Not until the 1920's and 30's did an Italian social theorist, Antonio Gramsci, provide a much needed elaboration of Marx's sketchy analysis of the relationship between capitalism and culture. Gramsci (1989) understood very clearly the importance of culture to capitalism. He realized that leading factions of the capitalist class had to invest considerable resources in all aspects of cultural life to shape a set of explanations and legitimations—hegemony—to ensure capitalism persisted. Gramsci recognized, however, that while culture provided capitalists with the means to continue their exploitation of the working class, it also provided the proletariat with the means to oppose their oppression. Gramsci believed that capitalist hegemony could be successfully contested in the cultural realm.

Building upon Gramsci's insights, Sut Jhally (1989) reconceptualizes Gramsci's notion of hegemony as the *formal* subsumption of culture. According to Jhally, "the *formal* subsumption [of culture] refers to a situation where an area of society becomes vital for the functioning of the economic system without actually taking on the structures of the economic system" (p. 72). In this situation, capitalism invests in culture not to make money, but to foster a social climate conducive to capitalist enterprise. With Gramsci, Jhally contends that as long as capitalism resorts to the manipulation of culture to ensure its perpetuation, it risks being challenged. Alternate cultural practices can create interpretations, norms, roles, or institutions—counterhegemonies—to oppose the capitalist mode of production. The history of capitalist modernity has, in fact, been one in which anti-capitalist forces have occasionally mustered powerful campaigns to contest capitalist hegemony.

#### Adult Education and Modernity

In his analysis of capitalist modernity, Habermas (1987) draws upon Marx's view that alienation is the negative bi-product of capitalism's intrusion into the life of the labourer to contend that the system's intrusion into the lifeworld erodes its culture and weakens its ability to reproduce itself; he describes this intrusion as "the colonization of the lifeworld." During the nineteenth-century, for instance, capitalists initiated a conscious political struggle to dismantle the medieval institutions that impeded increased productivity in Britain's fledgling manufacturing industries (Larrain, 1989). They challenged and overturned feudal restrictions, such as those on free trade, personal freedom of workers, practices of guilds, and usury, initiating in the process a capitalist revolution that spawned an era of unprecedented economic growth. In less than a century, radical political reforms "freed" rural populations from their feudal ties with the land, while fundamental economic reforms that fostered mass production rapidly transformed Britain from an agrarian to an industrial society. The result was massive social upheaval as rural populations, stripped of the means of providing their own sustenance—the land—converged on the industrialized centres to "freely" exchange their only remaining possession—their labour—for wages. This maelstrom of political, economic, and social change transformed, dramatically, not only how people worked but also their way of life. It was in this context that adult education first emerged.

Nineteenth-century reformers looked to adult education to develop cultural forms that would minimize the impact of industrialization. Such reformers fell into two camps: liberal reformers, who proposed *adaptive* adult education programs; and social reformers who proposed *critical* adult education programs. The purpose of the former was to instill in workers values, skills, attitudes, and beliefs that would help them adapt to the new

<sup>4</sup>It should be noted, however, that Marx's occasional reference to capitalism's efforts to deepen the mystification of capitalist social relations through the deliberate production of ideology attests to his understanding of the relationship between the system and lifeworld in modernity. See in particular *The German Ideology* (1947)

bourgeois "way of life"; the purpose of the latter was to help workers recognize the exploitive nature of the new capitalist mode of production.

Throughout its history adult education has continued to serve these two conflicting purposes: supporters of capitalism have used adult education to argue for a culture that addresses, first and foremost, the legitimation and accumulation needs of the system, while critics of capitalism have used adult education to argue for a culture that addresses, first and foremost, the needs of the lifeworld. Consequently, the hegemonic forces of the system have always been opposed by counterhegemonic forces in the lifeworld. At every step, the voices of critical adult educators have contested the role of adult education as a hegemonizing cultural practice. It is this healthy chorus of voices that we fear will be silenced with the commodification of adult education.

### **The Real Subsumption of Culture**

Over the last two decades, significant increases in the commodification of culture suggest a new "way of life" is emerging. The economic crisis of 1973 resulted in an intensive period of economic, social, and cultural restructuring. New computing, communications, and transportation technologies emerged, offering capitalists new ways to control the space and time of their productive environments. Jhally (1989) suggests this signals the *real* subsumption of culture. "Real subsumption," he argues, "refers to a situation where the media [and other cultural institutions] become not ideological institutions but economic ones. That is, investment in the media is not for the purpose of ideological control but for the purpose of reaping the biggest return. Culture is produced first and foremost as a commodity rather than as ideology" (p. 73).

John Tomlinson (1991), in his discussion of Cornelius Castoriadis's critique of modernity, argues that the real subsumption of culture—wherein the system invests in culture to produce profits—has created a cultural void at the center of contemporary society, noting that "what Max Weber first called the 'disenchantment of the world'—the breaking of the spell of traditional belief and practices—leaves a hole at the centre of culture, which Castoriadis believes cannot be adequately filled with stories of growth or development" (p. 164). This cultural void, which is created by the forces of late-capitalism, is the very space the new "culture" industries are rushing to fill.

The new "culture" industries, however, cannot replace the shared meaning frames that constitute the social realities that late-capitalism is destroying. Habermas (1987), for one, is singular in his insistence that a culture cannot be produced from outside the horizons of the lifeworld. A way of life can only be produced through the communicative accomplishments of the lifeworld's participants. But as David Harvey (1989) notes, the "culture" industries, in fact, have no real interest in creating integrated world views. They are concerned solely with the production of cultural commodities that can be rapidly and easily consumed in any context, that is, cultural artifacts that are detached from any particular meaning frame. This allows such artifacts to be consumed in any cultural milieu, dramatically increasing the size of the market. The fleeting images, infobytes, clichés, fashions, and sound effects that are flooding into the void of late-capitalism are perfect examples of such meaningless cultural artifacts. These products are consumed not because consumers find them meaningful but because they appeal, directly, to the soma of the consumer. Consumers watch TV, listen to CD's, change fashions because it feels good not because it makes sense. Most importantly, since *rational* justifications need no longer be offered to promote such commodities, it is almost impossible to offer *rational* arguments against their proliferation.

The proliferation of such meaningless cultural commodities has been greatly assisted by the emergence of powerful technologies of representation. The images that are used to promote cultural commodities are now so appealing that they eclipse all other forms of social reality. For example, the fleeting romances of the "soaps" are of more importance to many viewers than their own lives, and CNN's high-tech rendition of the Gulf War

became, for the many who experienced it on TV, the "real" war. "At the technological level," writes Debord (1990),

when images chosen and constructed by *someone else* have everywhere become the individual's principal connection to the world he [sic] formerly observed for himself, it has certainly not been forgotten that these images can tolerate anything and everything; because within the same image all things can be juxtaposed *without contradiction* [emphasis added]. The flow of images carries everything before it, and it is similarly someone else who controls at will this simplified summary of the sensible world; who decides where the flow will lead as well as the rhythm of what should be shown, like some perpetual, arbitrary surprise, leaving no time for reflection, and entirely independent of what the spectator might understand or think of it. (pp. 27-28)

The power of the contemporary media is now such that Jean Baudrillard, perhaps the most visionary of contemporary social theorists, goes so far as to suggest that reality no longer exists and that we now all live in a simulacra of fleeting images. This supports Debord's (1990) contention that "once one controls the mechanism which operates the only form of social verification to be fully and universally recognized, one can say what one likes" (p. 19). The media, Debord warns,

proves its arguments simply by going round in circles: by coming back to the start, by repetition, by constant reaffirming in the only space left where anything can be publicly affirmed, and believed, precisely because that is the only thing to which everyone is witness.... There is no place left where people can discuss the realities which concern them, because they can never lastingly free themselves from the crushing presence of media discourse and of the various forces organized to relay it. Nothing remains of the relatively independent judgement of those who once made up the world of learning; of those, for example, who used to base their self-respect on their ability to verify, to come close to an impartial history of facts, or at least to believe that such a history deserved to be known. (p. 19)

### Adult Education and Postmodernity

Since knowledge is very amenable to commodification, adult education may well benefit from the commodification of culture. Adult education entrepreneurs, along with other cultural capitalists, are finding that large profits can be secured by marketing commodities that have immediate appeal and which can be rapidly consumed. Short cycle courses, self-directed learning packages, distance education, and competency-based all serve to reduce the turnover time of production and consumption and maximize profits.

However, the danger is that once adult education becomes this commodified, it ceases to be a cultural practice. It ceases to draw upon the symbolic, upon the meaningful, to foster learning. As it becomes more and more a part of the libidinal economy, it must take its place alongside the many other "culture" industries that are emerging. Rather than convince consumers of the worth of their products, such industries focus on producing products that appeal to the consumer on the nonrational level. Consequently, adult education ceases to provide a cultural space from which such marketing strategies can be critiqued.

The commodification of knowledge and learning presents a dramatic challenge to adult educators who wish to continue the emancipatory cultural practices of adult education. The wanton replacement of integrated cultural totalities with fleeting media generated images destroys any rational basis from which to formulate a critique of the commodification process. Ultimately, the commodification of adult education may well deny adults the opportunity to develop a critique of the commodification process that threatens their very culture. It is imperative, then, that adult educators begin to view adult education as a cultural practice and draw upon its critical potential before the possibility of generating a critique completely disappears.

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## **Slipping the Reins on the Trojan Horse: Interpreting Self-Directed Learning as a Political Concept**

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**Abstract:** This paper argues that self-direction can be interpreted as part of a distinctively American cultural tradition that emphasises the individual's standing against repressive interests. As such, the concept has some powerful political underpinnings which, if made explicit, could play a substantial role in a critical practice of adult education.

In this paper I want to argue that critical adult educators may be making a strategically premature decision to dismiss self-directed learning and practice as wholly accommodative. We could miss an important tactical opening in the fight for a critical practice of adult education if we conclude too decisively that self-directed learning as an idea has been so hopelessly compromised that it can only function as an agent of domestication. If interpreted politically, self-directed learning could play an important role (along with critical theory, critical pedagogy and other work on transformative and emancipatory education) in providing a rationale for a critical practice of adult education. The case for self-direction as an inherently political concept rests on two arguments. First, that at the intellectual heart of self-direction is the issue of control, particularly control over what are conceived as acceptable and appropriate learning activities and processes. Second, that exercising self-direction requires that certain conditions be in place, conditions that are essentially political in nature.

### **Control as a Political Issue**

The one consistent element in the majority of definitions of self-direction is the importance of the learner's exercising control over all educational decisions. What should be the goals of a learning effort, what resources should be used, what methods will work best for the learner and by what criteria the success of any learning effort should be judged are all decisions that are said to rest in the learner's hands. This emphasis on control - on who decides what is right and good and how these things should be pursued - is also central to notions of emancipatory adult education. When talking about his work at Highlander, Horton (1990) stressed that "decision making was at the center of our students' experiences" and he pointed out that "if you want to have the students control the whole process, as far as you can get them to control it, then you can never, at any point, take it out of their hands" (p. 152). Who controls the decisions concerning the ways and directions in which adults

learn is a political issue highlighting the distribution of educational and political power. Who has the deciding say in framing the range and type of decisions that are to be taken, and in establishing the pace and mechanisms for decision making, indicates where control really resides.

Self-direction as an organizing concept for adult education can therefore call to mind some powerful political associations. It implies a democratic commitment to shifting to learners as much control as possible for conceptualizing, designing, conducting and evaluating their learning and for deciding how resources are to be used to further these processes. Emphasizing people's right to self-direction invests a certain trust in their wisdom, in their capacity to make wise choices and take wise actions. In Horton's (1990) words "you have to posit trust in the learner in spite of the fact that the people you're dealing with may not, on the surface, seem to merit that trust" (p. 131) ... "what we do involves trusting people and believing in their ability to think for themselves" (p. 157). Advocating that people should be in control of their own learning is based on the belief that if people had a chance to give voice to what most moves and hurts them, they would soon show that they were only too well aware of the real nature of their problems and of ways to deal with these. What keeps this from happening are the daily demands, both physical and psychological, of working in systems that are (sometimes quite literally) tiring them to death. From this perspective if we can remove the need to spend existence struggling to survive in a culture in which 'life chances' are distributed on a bell curve, and if we can succeed in reuniting the severed tie between economic and political forms of democracy, then 'ordinary' people will have no problem in finding collective solutions to what are really collective problems.

If we place the self-conscious, self-aware exertion of control over learning at the heart of what it means to be self-directed, we raise a host of questions about how control can be exercised authentically in a culture which is itself highly controlling. For example, it is easy to imagine an inauthentic form of control where adults feel that they are framing and taking key decisions about their learning, all the while being unaware that this is happening within a framework which excludes as subversive, unpatriotic or immoral, certain ideas or activities. Controlled self-direction is, from a political perspective, a contradiction in terms, a self-negating concept as erroneous as the concept of limited empowerment. On the surface we may be said to be controlling our learning when we make decisions about pacing, resources and evaluative criteria. But if the range of acceptable content has been pre-ordained so that we deliberately or unwittingly steer clear of things that we sense are deviant or controversial, then we are controlled rather than in control. We are victims, in effect, of self-

ensorship, willing partners in hegemony. Hegemony describes the process whereby ideas, structures and actions come to be seen by people as both natural and axiomatic - as so obvious as to be beyond question or challenge - when in fact they are constructed and transmitted by powerful minority interests to protect the status quo that serves these interests so well. A fully developed self-directed learning project would have at its center an alertness to the possibility of hegemony. Those engaged in this fully realised form of self-directed learning would understand how easily external control can unwittingly be internalised in the form of an automatic self-censorship - an instinctive reaction that "I can't learn this because it's out of bounds" (that is, unpatriotic, deviant or subversive). A fully adult form of self-direction exists only when we examine our definitions of what we think it is important for us to learn for the extent to which these end up serving repressive interests.

As we examine the issue of control in self-direction it is important to recognise that the 'self' that is involved in conducting learning is culturally formed and bound. Who we are and how we decide what it is important for us to be able to know or do are questions that are questions of culture. The self in a self-directed learning project is not an autonomous, innocent self, contentedly floating free from cultural influences. It has not sprung fully formed out of a political vacuum. It is, rather, an embedded self, a self whose instincts, values, needs and beliefs have been shaped by the surrounding culture. As such, it is a self that reflects the constraints and contradictions, as well as the liberatory possibilities, of that culture. The most critically sophisticated and reflective adults cannot escape their own autobiographies. Only with a great deal of effort and a lot of assistance from others can we become aware of how what we think of as our own wholly altruistic impulses, free from any bias of race, gender or class, can actually end up reinforcing repressive structures. Hence, an important aspect of a fully adult self-directed learning project should be a reflective awareness of how one's desires and needs have been culturally formed and of how cultural factors can convince one to pursue learning projects that are against one's own best interests.

I have argued that being in control of our learning means that we make informed choices. Making informed choices means, in turn, that we act reflectively in ways that further our interests. But informed choices can only be made on the basis of as full a knowledge as possible about the different options open to us and the consequences of each of these. Control that is exercised on the basis of limited information and unexamined alternatives is a distorted, mindless and illusory form of control. It may lead us to devote enormous amounts of energy to making individual incremental adjustments to our daily existence without realising that

these tinker with symptoms while leaving unaddressed the structural changes necessary if our efforts are to have anything other than fleeting significance. With regard to the importance of having full access to all relevant information and of being aware of how one's projects have been culturally framed, it is important to acknowledge that these are tentative ideals. We will never be in a position of total omniscience where we have constant access to every piece of relevant information about all the problems that face us, and where we possess such a pure and undistorted insight into our own motivations and impulses that it enables us to distinguish between real and artificial needs, or between constraining short term and empowering long term interests. However, it is just as important that we act as if these ideals could be realised. For control to mean anything it is crucial that we have access to significant information. What we define as significant information, of course, may be regarded by someone else as privileged or confidential. Consequently, taking control of our learning is likely to bring us into direct conflict with powerful entrenched interests. This leads me to the second political underpinning of self-directed learning, that concerning the unconstrained access to resources necessary for the completion of learning projects.

#### **Access to Resources**

How much control can really be said to exist when the dreams we dream have no hope of being realised because we are struggling simply to survive? The full meaning of control in a self-directed learning project cannot be realised simply by wishing it into existence. Any number of supposedly self-directed initiatives have foundered because those attempting to assume control over their learning found themselves in the invidious position of being denied the resources to exercise that control properly. Being self-directed is a meaningless idea if you are too weary at the end of the day to think clearly about what form of learning would be of most use to you, or if you are closed off from access to the resources necessary for you to be able to realise your self-designed projects. Being the arbiter of our own decisions about learning requires that we have enough energy to make reflectively informed choices. Decisions about learning made under the pressure of external circumstances when we are tired, hungry and distracted, cannot be said to be fully self-directed. The process of making reflectively informed decisions is lengthy, tiring and often contentious. For learners to exercise control in any meaningful sense they must not be so buried under the demands of their daily work that they have neither the time, energy nor inclination left over to engage in shaping and making decisions about their own development. Understood thus, we can see that central to a self-directed learning effort is a measure of unconstrained time and space necessary for us to make decisions that are



carefully and critically examined and that are in our own best long term interests.

An inauthentic, limited form of self-direction is evident when our efforts to develop ourselves as learners remain at the level of philosophical preferences because the resources needed for action are unavailable or denied to us. Exercising control over learning is meaningless if control comprises only an intellectual analysis of one's problems and solutions. As learners we may believe we have a beautifully accurate reading of our condition, and we may secure all kinds of promises from those in power to do something about it when resources are more plentiful, but if this is the extent of our control then we are doing little more than playing an intellectual game. Hence, as well as the resources of adequate time and energy needed to make reflectively informed decisions, self-directed learning also implies that learners have access to the resources needed to act on these decisions. As a learner, I may come to a very clear analysis of the skills I need to develop in order to do learn something but be told repeatedly by those I approach for the necessary resources to do this that while my plans are good ones the budget cuts that have just been forced on my organization and community mean that priorities have changed and my plans are now rendered useless. If this is the case then, sooner or later, I am bound to realise that the problem of blocked access to resources is not one of individual personalities (the myopic, anal retentive, bureaucratic administrator constantly trying to give me the shaft) but one of structural constraints. I will come to see that learning something I want to learn is a project that is intimately connected to changing not only the political culture whereby the posting of yearly profits is extolled as the zenith of cultural and community achievement, but also the structures through which wealth, power and resources remain the preserve of an unrepresentative minority. Taking control over our development as learners and requesting resources to act on the development efforts we envisage will bring many of us to a realisation of the connections between personal learning efforts and changes in the wider political structures.

It may also be the case in a self-directed project that I decide that I want to learn something that I consider essential for my own development, only to be told that the knowledge or skills involved are undesirable, inappropriate or subversive. A desire to explore an alternative political ideology is meaningless if books exploring that ideology have been banned from the public library because of their 'unsuitability', or, perhaps more likely, if they have never been ordered in the first place. In a blaze of admirable masochism I may choose to undertake a self-directed learning project geared towards widening my understanding of how my practice as an educator is unwittingly repressive and

culturally distorted. In doing this I may have to rely primarily on books because my colleagues are convinced of the self-evident correctness of their own unexamined practice. Yet I may well find that the materials I need for this project are so expensive that neither I, nor my local libraries, can afford to purchase them. In this regard it is ironic - an example of how ideas can concurrently be disseminated and marginalized - that critical analyses of adult education are sometimes incredibly expensive, priced beyond the pockets of many who could benefit from reading them. Again, I may need physical equipment for a self-directed effort I have planned and be told by those controlling such equipment that it is unavailable to me for reasons of cost or others' prior claims. If I decide to initiate a self-directed learning project that involves challenging the informational hegemony of a professional group, I may find that medical and legal experts place insurmountable barriers in my path in an effort to retain their position of authority. So being self-directed can be inherently politicising as learners come to a critical awareness of the differential distribution of resources necessary to conduct their self-directed learning efforts.

### Conclusion

Politically, the prevailing interpretation of self-direction which emphasizes atomistic isolation makes an engagement in common cause much harder for people to contemplate. It severs the necessary connection between private troubles and public issues and makes it harder for learners to realise that apparently private learning projects are culturally framed. Ironically, policy makers can also use the concept of self-direction to reduce public support for adult education. After all, they can argue, if adult educators tell us that adults are naturally self-directed learners (in contrast to authority-dependent children) then why bother making provision for their education? Won't they self-directedly take their own initiatives in learning anyway? But atomistic, divisive interpretations of self-directed learning need not be end of the story concerning the contributions of this concept to adult education theory and practice. If we can demonstrate convincingly the political dimensions to an idea that is now enshrined in so many programmatic mission statements and in the espoused theory of the field as a whole, and if we can prise the concept out of the slough of narcissistic, unproblematic self-actualization in which it is currently mired, then we have a real chance to use this idea as one important element in rebuilding a critical practice of adult education. Self-directed learning could become one of the most politically charged Trojan Horses the field of adult education has ever known.

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## COLLECTIVE GROUP LEARNING

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**Abstract:** This qualitative case study of four teams sought to understand the process of collective group learning. The study resulted in identification of a general process of group learning. However, this process was found to be profoundly affected by national ideology as manifested in authority structures and policies within the teams' institutional environment.

### Introduction

Increasingly, the construction of knowledge is becoming a collective endeavor. This is true both for the construction of formal knowledge in the positivist tradition in which knowledge is an accumulated understanding of the "truth" and for the naturalistic, phenomenological, critical and feminist traditions in which either the nature of reality or the role of power are at issue. Similarly, collective or team learning has proliferated in the informal construction of knowledge as part of planning, decision-making, and problem-solving. Thus, collective group learning by adults as part of their work or community participation has supplanted much individual learning, signifying as some have suggested that the complexity of our world and the vastness of information exceed the processing power of any one individual.

A review of adult learning theory reveals a focus entirely on individual and experiential learning. In fact, based on their review of the literature, Merriam and Caffarella define learning as a process by which behavior changes as a result of experience (Merriam & Caffarella, 1991). This seems to reflect a general cultural preference among those who generate learning theory in the U.S. toward individualism and the rational control of behavior, either by oneself as in cognitive learning theories, or by external forces as in behavioral learning theories. However, the emergence of increasing numbers of learning groups whose task is to construct new knowledge call into question the adequacy of individualistic and psychologically-based theories of adult learning and challenge us to explore learning as a collective and as a social phenomenon.

This study of four learning teams helps to address this theoretical gap in the adult learning literature. It contributes to an existing body of literature that includes studies by Kasl, Marsick and Dechant (1992) and the Group for Collaborative Inquiry (1991, 1992), as well as related work on collaborative intellectual teamwork by Ancona & Caldwell (1990), Allen (1984), Kraut, Egido, & Galegher (1990), Pelz & Andrews (1966), Cicourel (1987, 1990), and Austin & Baldwin (1991), and collaborative action research by McTaggart & Kemmis (1988), and Oja & Smulyan (1989).

### Methodology

The study was carried out using a modified form of Denzin's (1989) interpretive interactionist approach which attempts to understand "how this historical moment universalizes itself in the lives of interacting individuals" (p.139). The research process included the following phases: (1) identification of the research question "how do groups in work organizations learn?"; (2) critique of the adult learning literature; (3) collection of personal narrative pertaining to the group learning experience, observation of team meetings, and gathering of records and documents relevant to the teams; (4) examination of data to identify recurring features and key elements, so that I could determine how each individual and team is alike yet unlike each other; (5) classification, ordering, and reassembling of the group learning experience; (6) location of the group learning experience within the historical moment and the social structures of the work organization; and (7) writing.

Intensive data collection occurred over a four month period, with intermittent contact occurring over a longer period by a research assistant who was also employed by the company in the research and development unit. The eleven team members who participated in formal interviews were selected using the principle of maximum variation sampling (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). They were interviewed formally with additional informal discussions taking place over the four month period with various team and organizational members. In addition, there were eight formal observations of team meetings. The data

collection and analysis process was recursive. The recurrent interviews, observations, and the participation of the research assistant ensured an ongoing exchange of information and opportunities for the validation of data.

Trustworthiness was enhanced in the following ways: (1) the data for this study came from multiple sources (Lincoln & Guba, 1985); (2) field notes were kept to record all encounters with members of the organization; (3) field journals were maintained to record methodological decisions, reflections on personal interaction with the research process, and emerging hypotheses about the meaning of the data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985); (4) data were sorted, coded, and interpreted in an ongoing process that continued throughout the study; (5) investigators, data sources, and data collection techniques were triangulated; (6) particular attention was paid to negative cases; (7) members checked and commented on the analysis; and (8) The research process was reflected on critically throughout the project.

### Findings

The data from this study suggested a general process of collaborative group learning which encompassed specific phases: problem-posing, sharing knowledge within the group, gathering knowledge from outside of the group, combining and recombining the available knowledge into meaningful new knowledge, and sharing the new knowledge outside of the group. However, the data also indicated that this learning process was profoundly constrained by authority structures and policies within the company. Finally, the stories of each of these four teams suggested that prior to enacting any of these six phases, the team or one of its members had to find a way to neutralize the effects of the organization's authority structure and policies. Group learning could only occur among team members that valued and respected each others' potential contributions.

The four teams that participated in this study were part of the research and development unit of a high technology manufacturing company. They were voluntary teams that came together as part of the quality and the customer satisfaction emphases within the company. Teams had between 8 and 15 members and were either cross-hierarchical and area specific or cross-functional and of the same hierarchical level. They all selected their own leaders and members could join or drop-off the team whenever they wanted. For the most part, teams consisted of some combination of engineers, managers, technicians, and operators.

#### The Empowered Team

The Empowered Team was area specific. It included two engineers and a number of technicians and operators. The team's chair, Hal, viewed the teams as "training opportunities." He was also guided by a strong personal vision of empowerment which he had picked up in his work with youth groups in his church. He described himself as "giving the workers encouragement and helping them value themselves. I want them to see that their position can make a difference --- that what they do is important." This ideology was embraced by the team members who overwhelmingly described themselves as important to the team's success, and the team's achievements as important to the company.

The team members spoke warmly of their leader, and the value he placed on them and their contributions. One technician described how Hal had treated him: "I do a lot of computer analytical work for the team. Hal imposed that on me - not in a bad way - I love it. I had thought I should drop out. I didn't feel I was a contributor. But Hal said, 'No. I won't let you.' He made me feel I was needed." But he also noted, "He might not go that far with operators." I did not discover whether or not that was an accurate assessment of Hal, but the statement is significant in that it illustrates a recurrent theme in the company that the lower you are in the hierarchy, the less value you have to the company.

#### The Elite Team

The Elite Team was also area specific and had a reputation as "a winner." The operator and technician interviewed both attributed this to the large number of engineers. The engineer interviewed attributed the team's success to a new interpersonally-oriented management style that had been brought into their area and shared with the engineers. It was believed that what the engineers learned about this new management style would "trickle down" to the technicians and operators. Team meetings were heavily dominated by engineers with input from operators and technicians only on non-technical issues



such as costuming for their presentation at the company's international teams' competition. A technician described his team in this way: "This team is engineering heavy. It's experienced a lot of success because of the engineers, but there's not enough operator input. The operators need to get organized so they can get their input heard. Maybe have a pre-meeting of 5 minutes in order to get organized. Actually, operators should chair these meetings because it is the only time for them to get their problems addressed. I've seen engineer leaders brush operators' problems aside."

#### The Frustrated Team

The Frustrated Team was also area specific and lead by engineers. However, unlike the Elite Team, the Frustrated Team did not perceive itself as successful enough to go to the international teams' competition. Field notes show that the leader often argued down contributions by various team members and dominated much of the meeting in dialogue with another engineer. A typical interchange went as follows:

Chair: What other ideas are there? John. Are you awake?

John (an engineer): (with embarrassment) Yeah. I'm awake.

Chair: Carlos. Do you have any ideas?

Carlos (a technician): (After a long pause Carlos asks a technical question which the chair answers).

Chair: Do you have any ideas, Bettina, of what we can do?

Bettina (technician): (Silence).

Chair: Shall we... (Makes a suggestions which is met by silence). Maria (a technician) is the only one shaking her head.

Martha (an engineer) offers some information which the chair argues down.

This team found difficulty selecting a project. Action items frequently included only bringing donuts to the next meeting. When there was an action item, there was also a failure to follow up in the next meeting. One engineer believed the team would be improved if it had more operator members, and described a perceived attitude among other engineers that operators had little to contribute and were unable to learn.

#### Everyman's Team

Everyman's Team consisted entirely of operators and technicians. It was the only truly cross-functional team of the four that participated in the study and team members described the richness of learning about areas other than the ones in which they worked.

The team leader, Chris, was a technician studying at the local university to be an engineer. Chris was described by other team members as aggressive, tactless, and at times not well liked. But as one operator noted, "He is very gung ho. He expects a lot out of people and he gets the job done." From Chris' perspective, "People want to do a good job, so I give them a plan." Similar to those on Hal's Empowered Team, team members were enthusiastic that everybody's contribution was solicited and valued.

Chris believed that management did not put aggressive enough expectations on the teams and underestimated their capabilities. When a manager advised them to drop a particular project because it was too difficult for them, the team carried on with the project anyway. Team members were proud of their team and pointed to several innovations they had made that had won them recognition in the company.

There were a few things the team believed hampered its progress. One was that Chris' technical expertise did not cover all manufacturing areas. This meant, as one operator noted, that they needed to become better at seeking outside expertise when they needed it. Similarly, the low position of the team's members in the organizational hierarchy meant that they generally lacked the organizational know how and experience at communicating across departmental and hierarchical boundaries to accomplish their tasks. Finally, policies existed that meant operators could not be sure whether or not they would be allowed to come to team meetings.

One team learning episode team members addressed the attendance problem caused by this policy. In a brainstorming session, the team devised a system of subteams whereby each area was represented by a team rather than one or two individuals. The subteams became responsible for carrying out experiments, collecting data, and being sure that one of their members represented them at the team meeting.

### Discussion

Within the company's authority structure, authority and therefore worth were ascribed according to how much technical education employees had, or their place in the managerial hierarchy. Operators and technicians seemed to believe that their abilities were underestimated by management and described themselves as underchallenged and therefore bored and cynical about their work. These perceptions were corroborated by engineers with such statements as, "Technicians and operators are very bright people. They have very good insights. The team lets them shine. I don't believe technicians and operators don't have college degrees. They're so organized." This statement of disbelief regarding technician and operator intelligence and skills, illustrates how imbedded in individual perception was the belief that one's position in the hierarchy reflected the quality of contribution one was able to make. Several of the engineers also shared the perception that the purpose of the teams was to make the operators feel included, and that the contribution of these teams was not really critical to the company's success.

The teams that participated in this study were able to learn together only after they neutralized this authority structure. All teams but the Frustrated Team established a situation in which relative equality and mutual respect for each other's potential contribution existed. The Empowered Team accomplished this through the team leader's imposition of an ideology of empowerment, and the Elite Team and Everyman's Team accomplished it by maintaining a membership at one hierarchical level.

An examination of the broader national culture (Williams, 1970; 1979) tells us that competitive achievement, work, efficiency, and rationality are dominant values in U.S. society. These values emphasize the importance of personal achievement within the context of arduous and ceaseless competition. Bellah and his colleagues (1985) bring this ideology to the realm of knowledge in their characterization of "Americans" as holding a dream, "often a very private dream of being a star, the uniquely successful and admirable one, the one who stands out from the crowd of ordinary folk who don't know" (Bellah, et al, p.285). This ideology appears to play strongly in the institutional culture in which the teams functioned. It appears to have profoundly affected team learning.

The incidence of groups learning collectively is increasing. It appears that individual learning is in many ways inadequate to the problems we face in a complex and information rich world. Most of these groups will no doubt be forcefully influenced by a culture that supports the development of self and the exemplary achievement of individuals over the well-being of the community. How we negotiate these conflicts remains to be seen. But it cannot but help for us to be aware that many of the frustrations and conflicts we experience in groups may have roots in a historical and cultural ideological context that may be antagonistic to group learning.

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## PSYCHOSOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN: LINKING THIS LITERATURE TO THE STUDY OF LEADERSHIP

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**Abstract:** Provided in this paper is an overview of the themes and a critique that emerged from a critical review of the literature on the psychosocial development of women, and an exploration of how these themes are linked to the theory of leadership. Observations are made for further research related to leadership in education.

**Introduction and Purpose.** Linking the literature on adult growth and development and that of practice in adult education has had a long tradition, primarily in helping adult educators to understand how adults learn (e.g., Daloz, 1986; Merriam & Caffarella, 1991). A second very important area for these linkages between developmental literature and practice to be made is in the area of developing leaders for the field, both in relationship to those who hold formal leadership positions, such as deans and directors of major adult and continuing education programs, as well as the more informal leadership roles that adult educators often are asked to assume (e.g., in professional associations, as chairs of community activist groups). The rationale for making these connections between developmental literature and leadership theory and practice is twofold (Barnett, et al., 1992; Helgesen, 1990; Iannello, 1992; Leithwood, 1992). First, a key component of being a leader is the understanding of self--how one grows and develops, how one learns, and how one uses this knowledge to interact in one's chosen sphere of life. Second, leadership involves working with people, with one of the explicit assumptions being that part of being a "leader of people" is assisting both colleagues and followers in their own paths of development, or in the jargon of the times "empowering" those we work with to be the best that they can be.

The purpose of this paper is to develop further those important linkages between what we know about developmental theory and how that knowledge relates to leadership theory and practice in education. Because of the lack of literature on the linkages between what is known about women's development and leadership, the focus of this paper is on exploring the critical connections between those arenas of study. More specifically provided in this paper are: (1) an overview of the themes and a critique that emerged from a critical review of the literature on the psychosocial development of women; and (2) an exploration of how the themes on women's development that emerged from this review are linked to the study and practice of leadership. Three kinds of studies which address the topic have been reviewed for this paper: conceptual and empirical studies related to women's development; work on selected "mainstream" theories of leadership (contingency theory and transformational leadership); and descriptive and empirical studies on women and leadership.

**Themes and Critique on Literature Review on the Psychosocial Development of Women.** Three major themes emerged from a critical review of the literature on the psychosocial development of women (Caffarella & Olson, 1993; Caffarella, 1993). The first theme, the importance of relationships as central to the overall developmental process of women is seen throughout the literature, whether the studies are grounded in the more traditional theories (e.g., Levinson, 1986; Erikson, 1963) or are designed to describe women's lives from their perspectives (e.g., Gilligan, 1979; Hancock, 1989). This sense of connectedness to others, whether they be family, friends and/or work colleagues, and the need to maintain a relational stance towards life appears to be a life-time issue for women. Yet, there also is displayed a need for women to have their own

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**\*\*Portions of this paper have been taken from Caffarella, R. S. & Olson, S. K. (1993). Psychosocial development of women: A critical review of the literature. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 43, and Caffarella, R. S. (1993). *Psychosocial development of women: Linkages to teaching and leadership in adult education*. Columbus, OH: ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult Career, and Vocational Education.**



spirit of self, to be given recognition not just for who they are, but for their individual abilities and competencies. This mingling of the importance of relationships with the need to have a sense of the individual self is seen in the second major theme that emerged--that intimacy and identity are critical issues to women, again throughout their lives and not just at certain phases or stages of life. The third major theme captures the idea that diverse and nonlinear patterns are the norm for women's lives, with a single pattern of development almost the antithesis of how most women live out their existence. Rather, women's development is characterized by multiple patterns, role discontinuities, and a need to maintain a fluid sense of self.

Although these themes are drawn from a thorough review of both the conceptual and empirical work on women's development over the past 25 years, these observations are not generalizable to all women, and perhaps not even to many women. This lack of generalization stems both from how the parameters of this review were defined (that is, conceptual papers that focused only on women and empirical studies with women-only samples), and the limitations of the empirical studies themselves. The respondent base has been limited (primarily to young or middle-class Caucasian middle-class females) and the research designs and data collection techniques have been narrow (primarily qualitative with face-to-face interviewing). In addition, the use of differing theoretical perspectives, such as feminist theory and critical theory, in the study of women's development have been used sparingly and when incorporated have rarely been integrated into the mainstream literature on the psychosocial development of women. (For a more complete discussion of a critique of this work and suggestions for how this work on the psychosocial development of women can be expanded and enhanced, please see Caffarella and Olson (1993).)

**Linkages Between the Literature on Women's Development and the Literature on Leadership.** Regardless of the limitations of the work that has been done on the psychosocial development of women (and yet not denying or forgetting that these limitations do exist), these themes gleaned from the literature review on women's psychosocial development provide a starting place for discussing linkages between this literature base and that of the study of leadership. Discussed in the remainder of this paper, within the framework of the three major themes of development related to women (the centrality of relationships, the continuing importance of issues of identity and intimacy, and the diverse and nonlinear patterns of development), are the common and divergent points between the literature on women's development and that of the study of leadership.

**Mainstream Leadership Theories.** While there have been a host of leadership theories developed and tested over the years, two of the more traditional theories which have gained wide acceptance are contingency theory and transformational leadership. The aim of **contingency** theory is to predict the types of leadership style or behavior that will be most effective in a certain situation. Circumstances can be influenced by such features as a person's role, the task being undertaken, the needs of people in the organization, or the norms of the work group. Three of the most prominent contingency theories which are used in this discussion are Fred Fiedler's contingency model, Robert House's path-goal theory, and Paul Hersey and Kenneth Blanchard's situational leadership (Hoy & Miskal, 1987).

**Transformational** leadership differs somewhat from contingency theory since it stresses the leader's ability to facilitate other peoples' commitments to the mission of the organization and to restructuring the organization to accomplish these goals (Burns, 1979). Rather than ensuring particular tasks are accomplished, transformational leaders are more interested in motivating people to become cooperative and enthusiastic participants in the work of the organization. Although each theory takes a different approach to understanding effective leadership, they both stress that leaders take into account certain needs of other people in leading the organization.

Comparing the features of these prominent theories with the three themes emerging from the literature on the psychosocial development of women--relationships, intimacy and identity, and nonlinear patterns of development--reveals commonalities as well as issues

largely ignored in these traditional leadership theories. For each of these themes, overlapping ideas and areas not addressed in contingency theory and transformational leadership are highlighted.

The **relationships** that develop between leaders and other people in the organization are an important dimension of contingency and transformational leadership theories. For instance, Fiedler's contingency model stresses the importance of leaders being accepted and respected by the group; House's path-goal theory proposes that leaders' relationships are meant to improve other peoples' satisfaction and motivation; and Hersey and Blanchard's situational leadership emphasizes both task behavior and relationship behavior (Hoy & Miskal, 1987). Leaders who take a transformational leadership approach focus on relationships by helping workers to improve their skills, assisting staff members in developing a collaborative culture, and constantly promoting improvement in the organization's functioning (e.g., Leithwood, 1992; Sagor, 1992). In situations where tasks are ambiguous and there is little agreement about how to achieve certain goals, leaders subscribing to this theory will strive to "transform" the feelings and attitudes of other people in the organization in order to help them to believe in themselves and in the goals of the organization.

Although developing relationships between leaders and employees in the organization is important, contingency theory in particular suggests this type of behavior is only acceptable in certain situations. For example, supportive leadership is viewed as being necessary only when employees are bored, anxious, or lack self-confidence. Furthermore, these theories stress that if situations are less than ideal (e.g., people are not willing to take much responsibility, the task is unclear), then a more directive, task-oriented approach should be taken rather than attempting to develop relationships. This suggests that if the completion of a task is paramount, then establishing a meaningful relationship with employees is not always the best tact, especially if they are not highly motivated or a task is ambiguous.

Interestingly, the terms **identity** and **intimacy** do not appear in descriptions of contingency and transformational leadership theories. Both theories do indicate the importance of understanding other peoples' needs; however, being sensitive to a person's autonomy, feelings, and self-awareness are not of much concern. Rather, these theories tend to emphasize the employees' organizational identity rather than their personal identity. Organizational identity results from the leader's ability to help employees create realistic and challenging work goals, develop their group problem solving skills, and establish a common view of the organization's culture. By focusing on these skills and attitudes leaders are attempting to develop the organization's capacity to achieve its goals based on the employees' individual abilities and personal commitments to the vision of the organization. None of these issues, however, deal with the personal identity or intimacy needs of adults. In addition, these theories do not address the identity and intimacy issues of the leader. In fact, the leader's feelings, frustrations and self-awareness are not seen as affecting the situational context.

While the literature on the psychosocial development of women reveals patterns of **nonlinear development**, prominent leadership theories such as contingency theory and transformational leadership tend to ignore this developmental pattern. In fact, situational leadership assumes that employees have different levels of maturity as evidenced by their ability to set high and attainable standards, their willingness to take responsibility, and their experience. A leader's job, therefore, is to move employees through these predictable stages of maturity, eventually having them reach a stage where they can act independently without much direct supervision.

Transformational leadership is also not concerned with the nonlinear developmental patterns of adults; however, the notion of institutional transformation (Apps, 1988), which deals with helping institutions move from a current operational state to a desired future state, does suggest a pattern of development which is fluid and dynamic. Based on a preliminary examination of the organization's assumptions, values, and policies, a five-phase transformation process is undertaken. These phases include: (1) developing awareness by discovering if a policy, procedure, or practice is not functioning properly;

(2) exploring alternatives by determining how other organizations are dealing with similar situations; (3) making a transition by leaving behind the "old" ways of operating; (4) achieving integration by allowing time for new structures to become operational; and (5) taking action by putting new ideas into practice so they become the norms of the organization. The institutional transformation process is not linear, but is dynamic and flexible since groups may move back and forth between phases or may be involved in more than one phase at the same time. Although this process does acknowledge non-linearity, once again the focus is on organizational development rather than the personal development and identity of adults.

**Studies on Women and Leadership.** As with the selected mainstream theories on leadership, the linkages between the literature on the **centrality of relationships** in the lives of women and the practice of leadership has received the most attention in the literature. The commonality of thought that appears throughout this work is that women leaders, in both the public and private sectors, see as critically important being involved with the people with whom they work. This theme of the centrality of relationships to women's roles as leaders is seen in the values these women espouse, their leadership styles, and in the action strategies they describe (Astin & Leland, 1991; Blackmore, 1989; Helgesen, 1990; Shakeshaft, 1989).

Most women seem to place a premium on articulated values as fundamental to their work. Although different authors use varying terminology to describe these basic values, strong threads are seen among these writers related to the developmental theme of relationships, with particular emphasis given to the values of caring, responsibility to others, empowerment, interdependence, collaboration, and collegiality. These values are carried through in the style of leadership many women tend to adopt. The predominant words that describe this style are participatory management with collective action as one of the end products (Astin & Leland, 1989; Iannello, 1992; Shakeshaft, 1989). This means high involvement by the leader with her various constituent groups, from internal staff to recipients of services and/or goods. Carrying through this style of high involvement has "the theme of [fostering] connections between people, between people and ideas, and between people and policy" (Blackmore, 1989, p. 26) and building a sense of community (Shakeshaft, 1989). A number of action strategies, from fostering collaborative work projects to creating nonhierarchical organizational structures, have been suggested for implementing a style of participatory management that allows for open information sharing (Astin & Leland, 1991; Iannello, 1992). These types of action strategies lead to a community of workers who support each other, while at the same time working towards achieving the goals and tasks required by the organization.

The importance of the concepts of **identity and intimacy**, the second major theme related to women's development, has also been addressed in the literature on women and leadership, although not in great depth (e.g., Astin & Leland, 1991; Gallon, 1992). In exploring the concept of identity, the ideas of the importance of self-awareness, finding the authority of self, and developing one's voice as a leader seem to be key. Being self-aware means having a sense of who one is as a leader--being able to identify characteristics that others would recognize. The idea of finding self-authority is similar to the notion of being self-aware, but is coupled with the idea that the leader will then share who she is (her struggles and triumphs as a leader) as a way to foster leadership development in others. Developing one's voice comes with self-awareness and a sense of self-authority, and allows a leader to be heard as distinct from other leaders, whether they be male or female.

For women in leadership positions, the concept of intimacy (forming and maintaining close relationships with significant others) is also an important aspect to consider as for most women "the line separating the public world from the private" (Shakeshaft, 1989, p. 198) tends to be blurred. Although the inclination by some, if not many women, to blend work and other facets of their lives, especially those facets that involve their relationships outside of work, has been seen in a negative light and, in fact, has created many disadvantages for women leaders in terms of some work environments. In recent



years, however, this same phenomenon of women's multifaceted lives has been viewed as being advantageous both for women leaders and organizations (Astin & Leland, 1991; Helgesen, 1990; Shakeshaft, 1989). For example, being able to adapt to various roles and functions is a definite asset for women in handling the diverse responsibilities of leadership positions (Helgesen, 1990).

The third major developmental theme, that **developmental patterns for women are diverse and nonlinear**, has been addressed in two very distinct ways in the literature on women and leadership: styles of leadership, and career entry and patterns of career development. Related to women's styles of leadership, two studies, one from the developmental literature (Hancock, 1989) and one from the literature on women and leadership (Helgesen, 1990), use the same language to describe women's development and leadership style. Hancock (1989) describes women's patterns of development as circular in shape and views development for women as an organic and dynamic process, while Helgesen (1990) also uses this same image in discussing women's leadership styles--as circular versus hierarchical in form. In extending this image further, Helgesen (1990) uses the metaphor of a spider's web, with the leader in the middle and therefore connected to all of its many interwoven parts. Implicit in this image of the web are the ideas of the importance of inclusion, and group versus individual achievement.

In relation to career entry and patterns of career development, the links between this developmental theme of diverse and nonlinear patterns of development are discussed more frequently in the literature and are more apparent in practice (Shakeshaft, 1989; Morrison, 1992; Gallon, 1992). Many women, especially those with families, enter positions of leadership in education much later in life than men and often their credentials demonstrate what has been called "interruptions" or "blank" periods in terms of full-time employment. Even women who have remained employed may show "erratic" patterns of jobs held, both in terms of types of positions and length of time in service, often connected again to family responsibilities or moves required by a spouse's or partner's job. In other words, there is not a linear progression from one level in the organization to another as occurs in "normal" career development. What has been considered the norm for career patterns related to leadership positions (an orderly progression up the hierarchical ladder) just does not fit how many women live their professional lives.

**Concluding Thoughts and Observations.** The foregoing review indicates that some of the mainstream leadership theories as well as literature on women and leadership directly and indirectly recognize the importance of relationships, intimacy and identity, and nonlinear developmental patterns that emerge from the literature on the psychosocial development of women. Mainstream theories and women's studies of leadership emphasize that developing relationships is crucial for successful leadership; however, contingency and transformational leadership theories are less likely than women's studies of leadership to acknowledge that leaders must understand and respond to other peoples' personal identity needs (as separate from achieving the goals of the organization) and their diverse patterns of development.

Furthermore, the language used to describe important concepts in the mainstream leadership theories and women's studies of leadership is somewhat different. Contingency and transformational leadership theories focus on such issues as the organizational tasks to be completed; the organizational vision or mission; and how peoples' needs, maturity, and motivation are related to achieving the goals of the organization. This language system is quite different from the issues and terms found in studies of women and leadership which emphasize building a sense of community, recognizing nonhierarchical work structures, allowing for the development of one's voice, and acknowledging different patterns of career development. In short, there is a much closer alignment of ideas, terms, and concepts between women's leadership studies and the literature on the psychosocial development of women. One possible explanation is that both of these literature bases have focused on the effects of gender whereas traditional leadership theories have not explicitly examined gender differences (Mills & Tancred, 1992).



This review suggests several lines of further inquiry. First, work should be continued on examining the literature on women and leadership as it relates to personal and career development. Particular attention might be given to reviewing prominent theories and concepts which guide leadership development such as organizational theory, theories of motivation, and collaborative decision making strategies. In addition, data-based studies might be conducted to determine whether male and female leaders are attending to relationships, identity and intimacy, and diverse development patterns of other adults in the organization. Determining if leaders are consciously recognizing the importance of these issues would reveal different norms and values than exist in most organizations. Leaders who are found to embrace these ideals would be demonstrating the ethic of care and justice to be of prime importance as well as acknowledging that collaborative and cooperative ways of working can be used as often as individual direction and action.

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## WRITING WRONGS: IMPLICATIONS OF FOUCAULDIAN THEORY FOR RESEARCHING RACISM DISCOURSE

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"The political must always pose as a problem, or a question, the **priority of the place from which it begins**, if its authority is not to become autocratic". (Bhaba, 1991, p. 207)

**Abstract:** The author investigated how theoretical and analytical aspects of Foucauldian poststructuralism might contribute to understanding contemporary meanings of racism. In particular, discourse analysis is examined as an interpretive framework for "reading" theoretical accounts of racism.

### Introduction

Racism is an obvious focus of study for adult educators. Although a decade ago Canadian policy makers and educators avoided even the mention of racism, the term is now an integral part of common parlance, whether in the media, in schools, in public fora, or in the living rooms and workplaces of Canadians everywhere. Not surprisingly, antiracism education for children and adults is now high on the public agenda. And yet the nascent Canadian antiracism movement has barely engaged adult educators, who are still preoccupied with "softer" issues of ethnic and racial harmony. Can adult educators provide antiracism education that addresses questions of power, exclusion and discrimination in ways relevant to contemporary political realities? Should educators be turning their attention to emerging theories of the postmodern as it becomes clearer that seasoned intervention strategies are outmoded and increasingly ineffective in dealing with new configurations of racial dominance, resistance and violence?

The purpose of this study was to answer these questions, at least partially, by exploring what postmodern theoretical and methodological approaches offer adult educators interested in issues of racism and antiracism. Specifically, I investigated contributions and limitations of Foucauldian poststructuralism as a position for understanding racism. The study was informed by a selective reading of Foucault and critical literature on his work. Materials were scanned for contributions to analyzing the theoretical conception and social practice of racism. I report here on three aspects of that investigation: 1) understanding discourse as a theoretical theme and subject of analysis; 2) the value of focusing on discourse about racism as a way of understanding the political construction of its meanings and practices; 3) strengths and weakness of a Foucauldian analytic agenda for investigating social issues such as racism.

The findings suggest that a Foucauldian poststructuralist perspective offers a productive, although problematic, climate in which politically committed and strategically effective antiracism approaches could be developed. Foucault's interpretations of the operation of power and its relationships to truth and knowledge are particularly useful in understanding how racism is constituted, understood, acted upon and resisted.

### **The Postmodern Condition**

The term poststructuralism marks the place occupied by academic theorizing within the more general cultural shifts of postmodernism. Accompanying the postmodern situation of post-industrialism and post-colonialism is significant philosophical movement away from modalities typically associated with modernism: grand narratives legitimizing power and knowledge, including teleological Enlightenment parables of steady progress toward reason and freedom, and Marxian accounts of economic determinism. In short, the condition of postmodernism is characterized by "the postmodern break with totalizing, universalizing 'metanarratives', and the humanist view of the subject which undergirds them." (Lather, 1991, p.5)

In this shift, the postmodern notion of discourse emerges as a significant focus for analysis. Its role in constituting social realities is seen to be more productive focus than the Marxian concept of ideology as false consciousness. The latter is perceived as moribund because of its dependence on an increasingly untenable epistemology of a single, but hidden, social truth (Barrett, 1991; Lather, 1991). In addition, increased attention to relations of power, literary paradigms, difference and subjectivity have accompanied a general shift in social science from an emphasis on **cause** to one of **meaning** (Vertinsky, 1992).

### **Discourse**

Discourse indicates a range of statements "the nature of which, in different combinations, constitutes the emergence of certain cultural and political practices, perceptions and power relationships which these entail." (Cambridge and Feuchtwang, p.29, 1990).

It would be misguided to interpret the project of Foucauldian inquiry as straightforward analysis of texts or discourses. It differs from poststructuralisms (such as those associated with Barthes and Derrida in particular) which are organized around valorization of the literary, and which deconstruct text for meaning and political intent buried within operations of the texts themselves. Foucault emphasizes discourse as the relevant unit of sociological analysis, while text is considered the relevant linguistic unit. Discourse is always placed in its social context.

For Foucault, discourse is a translucent record, a dynamic ledger of systems of interpretation. It engages actively with systems and actors as medium, method, message, means, metaphor and instrument for practices of power. Discourse is an expression of "what is possible to say and see at any given period, the seeable and the sayable" (Eribon, 1991, p. 153).

### **Reading Racism as Discourse**

Racism is constituted by social relationships of power. Foucauldian analysis directs the investigator to observe ways in which relationships among individuals and their actions as social agents are formed within discourses about racism. Such inquiry pays attention to how, and the extent to which, positions of knowledge, authority and subjectivity concerning racism are formed within these relationships (Cambridge and Feuchtwang, 1990).

In the Foucauldian sense, to study discourse is to illuminate the historical registers - economic, social, political, ideological and cultural - which transform seeing racism and speaking about it into their sociological dimensions (Eribon, 1991). Examining discourses about racism always involves examining the theoretical basis of the societies or institutions which are describing it. These descriptions show what is at risk in the culture, and what is said in order to condemn racism. Moreover, such analysis can lay bare discontinuities in what is often (re)presented as a seamless vision of ideal society woven into the fabric of universal condemnation of racism on moral grounds. However, as in other countries, Canadian discourse on racism can be shown to be radically sutured together, based as it often is on the unexamined and conflicting positions of its protagonists.

Those who set out to understand the meaning of racism might choose from a variety of authoritative sources. Their choice will depend on which knowledge base they are privileging, and for what reasons. Those politically engaged with racism will likely seek a definition of racism from a community involved in struggles against (or for) it. Politicians look to consultants, bureaucrats or human rights experts to translate racism to them. Educators will likely look to authorities in whom our profession has confidence: sociologists perhaps, or other educators, or possibly theorists in the field. For those whose interest in racism is unspecified and somewhat passive, sources are likely to be what emerges as popular discourse: the media, literature or film, or discussions with peers.

Each of these discursive domains presents particular versions of racism. Each sanctions its own speakers, and constitutes and situates subjects and objects of racism. Each reifies racism in certain ways, describes it and positions its speakers in some relation to it. Subtextually defined roles are constructed for the reader as well, who is underwritten within and engaged by the teleologies of action or thought contained in what is "told" about racism (Cohen, 1992). What is said in these accounts is what is say-able and see-able within its (diachronic) context. Therefore what is not said serves to define what is prohibited and withheld in explanations of racism. Finally, the meanings themselves are challenged and argued for, supported and detracted from. The terrain wherein meanings of racism are contested can be seen as a political space inhabited and impacted on by both meaning-seekers and meaning-makers.

The outcomes of antiracism education depend to a large degree on the way learners read their position within the discursive strategies of persuasion used by educators. In an exploration of discursive roles embodied in peoples' opinions about racism and antiracism, Cohen (1992) discerned narrative themes which he claims were the key to understanding learners' emotional investment in antiracist positions. How particular groups are positioned within and with regard to racism in discourse will influence the strategic positions they adopt in their approach to and experience of antiracism education.

Drawing from his conviction that the production of discourse by societies was controlled, selected, organized and redistributed according to certain procedures, Foucault outlined



three systems by which discourse is constrained: 1) extra-discursive categories of exclusion: what is prohibited and taboo in discourse; 2) principles of delimitation internal to discourse, such as the use of commentary, the notion of the author as a recognizable and individualized "I", discursive disciplines which arrange and classify knowledge and push to the margins anything it cannot assimilate; 3) rules of discourse execution: writerly or scholarly rituals, requirements that must be met before one has the right or position to speak, the means by which discourse is appropriated by certain speakers, and the role of institutions which have political means to maintain or modify the appropriation of discourses (Foucault, 1971).

This is a powerful perspective for antiracism educators as well as general readers of discourse. It can serve as an instrument for unpacking rhetorical strategies contained in discourse about racism, as well as a content guide for antiracism education. Some suggested areas for inquiry are: 1) examining the subjectivity of the author or theorist, especially as this is constituted by such aspects as gender, class and racism interests. Most Canadian theoretical writing about racism is written by white, middle class males. What "special pleadings" (Cohen, 1992) are contained in this subjectivity? 2) analyzing the ideological constitution of the speaker's position by asking about interests in which the theorist partakes, but is not necessarily the source of. For example, one could ask: How does the discipline from which the theory is drawn construct the notion of cultural difference and the other? Is the perspective of the writer opaquely but always western, and is the bearer of cultural difference consistently "othered" in discourse by this centrality? What notions of humanity are operating within the discourse? How is racial hierarchization invoked historically by white western constructs of "human nature"? 3) To what extent are the positions of domination and oppression normalized within the discourse? To what extent do accounts of racism identify and valorize spaces of resistance to the operations of power being described? 4) In what sense does the discourse of racism and antiracism inscribe or invent an identity of otherness for those who by their marginality shape and occupy only the outskirts of the discourse, and yet are defined by it? (Bhaba, 1990) 5) Does this particular racism discourse invent yet another identity for the other as unknown (for example as "visible minority"), against which backdrop a liberal humanist definition of society is cleansed/purged of the undesirable accusation of racism? \*

Thus, scrutinizing discourses about racism is not appraising how a society generates, exhibits or experiences racism. Rather it analyzes relations and positions of power within statements about the meaning of racism, while looking for a unity behind these statements. It is the pattern or configuration of this unity, not the intentionality in any given speaker, which will yield clues about the systems of power that both define and result from racism (Dreyfus and Rabinow, 19983)

\*This stance consciously arms the reader with a "hermeneutics of suspicion" (Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1983). Foucault referred to this method of reversing certainties without renouncing convictions as an "ethics of discomfort" (Eribon, 1991, p. 291). However, positionalities in discourse, whether those of writer or reader, do not result in a necessity of interests or outcomes, but rather a **probability** requiring identification and heeding.

Stripped of its elitist rhetoric, this is the preoccupation of Foucauldian discourse analytics<sup>\*\*</sup>. The Foucauldian analytical task is to reexamine the concepts of knowledge, the conditions of knowledge, and the status of the knowing subject. It is an analytic which, while acknowledging the importance of the hermeneutical project of interpreting meanings people share about things and actions in their everyday lives, interprets instead what is going on behind and beneath manifestations of meaning (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982). In a McLuhanesque way, the gaze of discourse analytics settles on the politics of the medium of meaning-making (social practice), rather than the message.

### Humanism

Foucault's Nietzschean sense of irony, his antihumanism, and his analytical detachment and obscurantism have been seen as severely limiting the usefulness of his approach to emancipatory, politically committed social research (Bennett, 1991; Fraser, 1991). It is not possible in this brief paper to address each of these criticisms of Foucault's work. However, since antihumanism has been the locus of much doubt concerning the liberatory utility of Foucault's work, I will address this aspect by outlining a poststructuralist, postcolonialist rejoinder to assumptions about the role of humanism as the "handmaiden" of emancipation.

Foucault's critique of the Enlightenment conception of humanism as one of the totalizing prescriptives of modernism can be elaborated from the critical perspective of antiracist postcolonialism. It can be argued that theoretical humanism incorporates "theoretical instruments" (Balibar, 1991, p.289) for practices of racism. The humanism endorsed by modernism is uncritically assumed to be fundamentally ethical and morally unambiguous. Nevertheless, history documents the cooption of humanism by, for example, fascism in its discourses of racial purity and nationalism, while discourses of the New Right clearly invoke a similar exclusionary humanism.

Foucault's critique of humanism is more than a philosophical project. It derives in part from a post-war tradition among French intellectuals construed initially as a political critique of colonialism. In the words of Sartre: "Humanism is the counterpart to racism: it is a practice of exclusion." (Sartre, 1976). This critique, articulated by anti-colonial activists such as Franz Fanon, perceived that "human" was constituted as an exclusionary category, and was invoked to put males before females, or to classify non-whites as subhuman (Young, 1992). From the oppositional perspective of the colonized other, summons to humanism were more often a summons to exclude. In this sense, humanism is problematized as part of Western nationalist discourse which "normalises its own history of expansion and exploitation by inscribing the history of the other in a fixed hierarchy of civil progress." (Bhaba, 1985).

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<sup>\*\*</sup> Note that this summation does not reference the indispensability of historicity, a pivotal aspect of Foucauldian genealogical method, nor the significance of the body as the fulcrum of domination and resistance, which characterized Foucault's later work.

### Discussion

Contemporary social and educative theorizing, research and practice has been indelibly imprinted, if not transformed, by Foucault's concepts of discourse, the constituted subject, the unity of power and knowledge, and his identification of the body as the focus of power operations such as discipline, punishment and surveillance. The absence in Foucauldian philosophical schema of foundational moral or emancipatory principles does not *a priori* obviate the usefulness of his analytical "toolbox" in the cause of social action. In fact, as demonstrated in the discussion above, critique of discourse serves to clarify and eliminate theoretical mechanisms which actually function, in some instances, as instruments of oppression and exclusion.

Perhaps the movement away from Marxism as the dominant rationale for emancipatory praxis, reflected in Foucault's work but embodied more broadly in the postmodern project itself, evokes a moral wasteland for some. The prospect of multiple and hyperspecific genealogies of social systems of power may suggest a frenzy of cynicism and relativity to those used to the comforts of totalizing doctrines of political truth, and to the consoling teleology of social theorizing on a grander scale. How much of this critique is a reflection of the anxiety of the age (Harvey, 1989; Lather, 1991), and how much is a realistic assessment of the limitations of this approach, will continue to be contested for some time to come.

Nevertheless, this uneasiness stands as a cue to poststructuralism theorists to "mind the gap" between theory relieved of encumbering foundationalisms, and practice charged with doing the right thing. The Foucauldian notion that power and truth are inseparable will continue to destabilize the very practices of theory building. For example, as producers and products of discourses about racism, theorists cannot escape challenges concerning their own authorial positionality. When meanings of racism are created, so are subjects and objects of racism. The Foucauldian project exhorts intellectuals to examine the exercise of power involved in making something or someone available as an object of knowledge or inquiry.

The challenge for antiracism activists and educators is to develop new theoretical languages and new methods of research and emancipatory practice that do not depend on totalizing or exclusionary narratives. Liberated from the hermeneutical project of searching for and validating truth in hidden meanings, the interpretative analyst is, arguably, more likely produce knowledge useful in resisting practices of domination such as racism (Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1983).

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Note: References will be distributed at the Conference.

Power and Responsibility in Planning Adult Education Programs  
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Abstract

The paper offers adult educators a practical guide to normatively explicit planning practice by taking power and interests as central to action and explaining what adult educators can do to plan programs responsibly.

Background and Purpose

Adult educators' planning practice matters because the educational programs they construct will make the world a different place. Therein lies their central responsibility, namely, what kind of world will be made through their practices? Of course, as any planner knows, they are not free agents able to translate their own interests directly into the purposes, content, and format of a program. Rather, their planning is always conducted within a complex set of personal, organizational, and social relations of power among people who may have similar, differing, or conflicting sets of interests regarding the program. Their responsibility, and the central problem of their practice, centers on how to negotiate the interests of these people to construct a program. We are able to put this problem in sharper relief when seeing that the dictionary defines responsibility as "able to answer for one's conduct or obligation, politically answerable." The problem is to answer the following question in every concrete planning activity: To whom is the adult educator ethically and politically answerable? or stated differently, whose interests will be negotiated in what ways in constructing the educational program?

Our answer is that the planner is responsible for negotiating the interests of all people who may be affected by the educational program. This belief in a substantively democratic planning process is based on the long history of democratic faith in this country and continuing efforts to structure our social relationships along these principles. Our point is simple: if this principle forms the basis of our social life in all other domains of society, then it should guide our actions as adult educators. While carrying this belief, it is essential that we recognize that adult educators must always act in historically-developing and structurally-organized relations of power that may either constrain or enable them to negotiate the interests of all affected people. If planners have good intentions but lack the sense for a politically-astute practice, they are likely to become martyrs or saints rather than effective educators.

The purpose of the paper is to offer a theory that explains how program planners can anticipate the structural relations of power in which they must necessarily act and then respond in ways that nurture, though hardly ensure, a substantively democratic planning process (see Cervero & Wilson, in press, for an extended discussion). This is not a procedural account of how to plan programs, although we believe adult educators need technical knowledge and skill to plan responsibly. Rather, it is our attempt to make sense of program planning practice in a way that honors both its situationally-specific character as well as its



fundamental normative basis. We hope to enlarge adults educators' sense of responsibility and, at the same time, offer them practical guides for seeing the world in which these responsibilities must necessarily be carried out.

### Power relations and planning

Power should be conceived as the capacity to act distributed to individual planners by virtue of the enduring social relationships in which they participate (Isaac, 1987). This view recognizes both the ubiquitous nature of power as well as the social conditions of its existence. First, it is important to understand that power is not a specific kind of relationship, such as one where one person gets another person to do something he otherwise would not have done. Although this is the most common view of power, it is entirely too restrictive for it fails to recognize that all planning practice assumes the capacity to undertake the activity. Rather, power is a capacity to act, which is a logically necessary feature of all planning practices. To speak of the power of a planner, then, is to indicate what planners can do, "where doing is understood as performing a practical activity according to certain understandings and reasons" (Isaac, 1987, p. 76). These understandings or ends to which action is directed, which we call interests, are essential dimensions of power and of action. The second important feature of the power (or capacity to act) a planner has is that it results from certain enduring social relationships. To say this does not deny either that individual planners actually possess power nor that they exercise it. Rather, it means that a planner's capacity to act has social conditions of existence (Isaac, 1987).

If we are to consider planning practice as socially situated action, conducted within varying relations of power, and characterized by the negotiation of interests, what would rational action look like? The answer, in short, is that being rational means anticipating how existing relations of power are likely to support or constrain a substantively democratic planning process and acting in ways to nurture such a process. In a political world, rationality in practice can only be maintained if program planners carefully assess the institutional contexts in which they work and act according to the structure of the situations that they face (Forester, 1989). We must face the reality that planners do not typically work in situations characterized by symmetrical relations of power where all interests are equally important and negotiation proceeds on a consensual basis. Rather, the most common situations are marked by asymmetrical relations of power that pose threats as well as offer opportunities to democratic planning. In response to these common conditions, we need to understand that to plan responsibly, it is necessary to be political. It is simply not possible, nor responsible, to act the same in all situations because what would protect democratic planning in one situation may prevent it in another. This is not a relativistic argument that says all planning actions are equally valid nor does it argue that whatever works is necessarily good planning. Rather, it asks planners to assess how a concrete planning situation is socially and politically constructed and how their relations of power can be exercised to nurture substantively democratic planning.

How to characterize the political boundedness of rational action thus

becomes the central problem for any theory of program planning. Planners inherit an historical starting point of power relations, and to be useful, the theory needs to conceptualize the recurring influences planners can expect to encounter. If the bounds that planners face were thought to be idiosyncratic to each situation, then rational action would become relativistic. Planners would have to "make do" because they would have no way of anticipating the pressures, threats, and opportunities available to them. However, if we could typify expectable bounds across planning situations, planners would be able to act in practical ways that sustain democratic planning. Table 1, which is adapted from Forester's work (1989), offers a conceptual scheme that differentiates four different ways that relations of power can structure the situations in which program planners must carry out their work. This understanding of the contingencies of power relations provides a rationale for the political boundedness of rational action in planning by specifying the situations in planners must act. The table also suggests correspondingly different strategic approaches that planners should use to plan responsibly in each type of situation. In other words, the table offers a way to read how the relations of power structure planning situations and offers approaches to guide planners' exercise of their social power in these situations.

Table 1  
The Political Boundedness of Rational Planning:  
Constraints on Substantively Democratic Planning

| Contingency<br>of Constraint | Autonomy of the Source of the Constraint          |                                                          |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
|                              | Socially Ad Hoc                                   | Socially Systematic                                      |
| Inevitable                   | Bounded<br>Rationality I:<br>Individual Limits    | Bounded<br>Rationality II:<br>Social<br>Differentiation  |
|                              | Strategy: Satisfice                               | Strategy: Network                                        |
| Socially<br>Unnecessary      | Bounded<br>Rationality III:<br>Pluralist Conflict | Bounded<br>Rationality IV:<br>Structural<br>Legitimation |
|                              | Strategy: Bargain                                 | Strategy: Counteract                                     |

Table 1 presents a template of how planners should read situations in terms of constraints to action resulting from particular relations of power. It is a four-cell design created by crossing the contingency of the constraint (inevitable versus socially unnecessary) and the autonomy of the constraint (socially ad hoc

versus socially systematic). These conditions must be anticipated because they are important determinants of what planners can do and should do in terms of negotiating interests to construct the program in any situation. In order to plan responsibly, then, one must first recognize the situation for what it is (given your operative political theory) and then call upon the appropriate strategy of response. This table is not meant to be a complete mapping of all situations that planners face in their practice; rather, it is a heuristic analytic framework to help planners focus on what really matters as they seek a democratizing planning process. Even as a sensitizing analytic framework, planners would find that situations lie along a continuum for both dimensions rather than falling neatly into one cell or another. Of course, program planning in adult education is not simply about power and strategy, but necessarily involves the purposes for which power is exercised. These purposes, which we call interests, give form and meaning to the programs developed by adult educators. In the next section, we turn our attention to a vision of how interests can be articulated within program planning practice.

#### Pragmatics with Vision: Nurture Substantively Democratic Planning

If planning practice is an activity that is essentially normative as opposed to strictly technical, then planning theory itself must also be normative if it is to be ethically instructive for the real judgments that planners routinely make. Such a theory must have an explicit value position, which is not based solely on what works for those in power. If interests are chronically negotiated in any planning process, then some ethical and strategic vision is needed to manage this process. Our vision of democratic planning means that all people who are affected should "be involved in the deliberation of what is important" (Apple, 1992, p. 11) about the educational program. Thus, a democratizing planning process means simply that real choices will be put before people about what collective action to take in constructing the curriculum, not that the people's action is true in some transcendental sense.

By arguing for a democratizing process as the ethical and strategic principle for negotiating interests, we explicitly align ourselves with a particular intellectual and practical tradition in American education (Beyer and Apple, 1988). This stretches from Dewey's efforts to develop democratic forms of education to more recent attempts to reinterpret and extend this work in a way that recognizes the threats to democratic education posed by its relationship to the asymmetrical power relationships embedded in the social, cultural, political, and economic systems of American life (Apple, 1990; Collins, 1992; West, 1989). Importantly, then, saying that planners have an interest in a democratizing planning process is not to pose some transcendental ideal on their reality, but rather to articulate an ethical belief that has been developed and validated by the historically evolving society in which adult educators live. If adult education is to have a positive and productive relationship to the ongoing creation of the social, cultural, political, and economic systems of American life, it must abide by the same interest of the larger society. As Apple (1990) points out: "democracy is not a slogan to be called upon when the 'real business' of our society is over, but a constitutive principle that must be integrated into all of our daily lives" (p. xvi).

We can now tie together the themes of the previous section and this one with the image: "To plan responsibly, be political with a vision." The vision is to nurture a substantively democratic process in light of the asymmetrical relations of social power held by those people whose interests should be negotiated in constructing the curriculum. Thus, in order to plan programs responsibly we need "pragmatics with vision" (Forester, in press, p. 48). By saying that the vision is of a "substantively" democratic process, we mean to go beyond the simple techniques or formal structures of democracy (Forester, 1989), such as arranging learners into a circle and asking them what they want to learn. Rather, we have to recognize that people act within a vast network of power relations, some symmetrical and some asymmetrical, as part of their participation in the larger society and in the organizations within which programs are planned. Under this view, if planners treat all people equally under the guise of equal opportunity, they help insure that the interests of those who have the most power will continue to be served (Forester, in press). Importantly, then, the actual action taken by a planner to nurture a substantively democratic process could be different in different situations (as illustrated in Table 1). Conversely, the same action could nurture a democratizing process in one situation while thwarting it in another.

If the actual educational programs that take place are causally related to the interests of the people who construct them, then it obviously matters who is involved (and in which judgments they are involved) in planning. While the strategic impulse of responsible planning should be that all people who are affected by the program have the right to participate in constructing it, knowing which people should be involved and how to create conditions for their substantive involvement is almost always an uncertain, ambiguous, and risk-taking activity. There are many reasons for this, not the least of which is that planners often must work in situations marked by asymmetrical power relationships that do not abide by this vision. However, this is also complicated because people have multiple and sometimes conflicting interests, some of which may be well-known and explicit and others of which may be so embedded in the on-going social relationships that they are not conscious. Thus, no theory can unambiguously prescribe whether the actual people selected to construct a specific educational program are, in some transcendental sense, the "right" people. The planner must make a practical judgment in each and every situation based on a pragmatics with vision.

In this context we propose a heuristic device for recognizing who potentially has an interest in any educational program. We suggest that the interests of five categories of people are always represented in planning programs: learners, teachers, planners, institutional leadership, and the affected public. As happens in most planning situations the same people can represent several of these categories. The scheme, however, rests on the assumption that each group has a potentially different set of interests in constructing the program. The important planning issues, then, are which people actually represent these interests, are they legitimate representatives, and are they the best representatives that could be secured in the situation.



### Conclusion

We can now restate the themes of the paper and condense them into three central points. The starting point is that educational programs are constructed through negotiating the interests of the people who are involved in the planning process. We have offered a heuristic way to categorize the groups of people who have potentially unique interests in the construction of any program. In our view, program planners negotiate the interests of five groups of people anytime they develop a program: learners, teachers, planners (their own interests), the leadership of the institution in which the program is planned, and the affected public. The important practical question, thus, is not whether to negotiate the interests of these groups of people. Rather, the issues that matter are which people actually represent the interests of these five groups, are they legitimate representatives, are they the best representatives given the situation in which planning is done, and how substantive is their representation. Our answers to these questions, we have argued, must be guided by an approach we call "pragmatics with vision." Our second point is that some vision will guide planners in answering these questions. The vision we proposed was substantively democratic planning, in which all people who are affected should be involved in the deliberation of what is important about the program. However, and this is the third point, planners must necessarily carry out this vision within a context of actual relations of power that either threaten or support this vision. Table 1 presented a graphic illustration of four types of planning situations and the strategic responses that can be used to actualize this vision in those types of practical situations.

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## OPERATIONALIZATION AND ASSESSMENT OF CONCEPTIONS OF TEACHING

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### Abstract

Conceptions of teaching are representational models which people hold concerning teaching. An instrument, Conceptions of Teaching Scale (CTS) was developed to operationalize and assess conceptions of teaching of adult instructors. The instrument was found to be valid and reliable.

### Introduction

In many countries, adult education and instruction occur in a diverse socio-cultural and political settings. Institutions which offer adult education programs are equally diverse in terms of their philosophy, mission, size, structure and program offerings. Teachers of adults, too, are not homogeneous. They come from varied socio-cultural backgrounds, and bring into the educational settings diverse sets of experiences, values and beliefs. Inevitably, these teachers or instructors have their own personal understanding and meaning of teaching. Their views of teaching are not identical, and they also have different assumptions, beliefs and attitudes toward adult teaching and learning. In the literature of adult education, the focus of research on teaching has been directed towards differential ways of teaching adults and pre-adults (e.g. Beder & Darkenwald, 1982; Gorham, 1985), instructor's andragogical-pedagogical orientation (e.g. Hadley, 1975), and teaching styles (e.g. Conti, 1989). Inquiry into conceptions of teaching in adult education is new but emerging (Larsson, 1983).

The primary purpose of this paper is to describe the development and construction of an instrument to operationalize and assess Pratt's (1992) five conceptions of teaching. Procedures for testing the instrument's validity and reliability were also explained.

### Conceptions of Teaching

The actions, intentions and beliefs of teachers of adults constitute a large part of the psychological and ideological aspects of teaching. It is within these aspects that content or curriculum is interpreted,

delivered and acted upon, where teachers teach and students learn. These interrelated aspects of teaching delimit the way teachers conceive the meaning of teaching. Teacher behavior or teaching style is substantially influenced and even determined by the teacher's dominant conceptions of teaching. Conceptions of teaching are abstract, cognitive representations of how people (that is, teachers) conceive the meaning of teaching. Conceptions of teaching are dynamic and evolved with experiences, and different people have different views regarding their conceptions of teaching. Conceptions of teaching represent normative beliefs concerning the relationship between the means and ends of teaching. They are assumed to be held or possessed by teachers with differing degree of dominance, but one or two conceptions may be more dominant than others (Pratt, 1992). Conceptions of teaching, like other conceptions, are also assumed to be anchored in teachers' cultural, social, historical, and personal realms of meaning. Thus, conceptions of teaching held by teachers are presumed to be influenced, and even determined by the teachers' personal characteristics, experiences, and broad socio-cultural milieu.

Conceptions of teaching are 'representational models' comprised of three interrelated aspects (action, belief and intention) which people held concerning teaching. Action is primarily concerned with role and responsibility of the instructor in teaching. The second aspect, intention is concerned with what the instructor aims to achieve in teaching. Finally, belief refers to an instructor's conviction that something is 'right' or 'true' in teaching. According to Pratt (1992, p 204-205) there are five dominant conceptions of teaching held by instructors of adults. The five conceptions of teaching are dubbed as Engineering, Apprenticeship, Developmental, Nurturing and Social Reform. Each of these conceptions varies in terms of how instructors conceived the meaning of teaching in relation to five elements: teacher (roles, functions, and responsibilities), content (what is to be learned), learners (nature of learners and learning), ideal (purposes of adult education), and context (external factors which influence teaching). Since teaching is a relational process, conceptions of teaching would reflect the relationships between the elements, namely the relationships between (1) learners and content (represented by Line X), (2) learners and teacher (represented by Line Y), and (3) teacher and content (represented by Line Z).

The Engineering conception of teaching is characterized by the teacher's concern with transmitting of information efficiently so as to achieve a set of predetermined ends. Students are assumed to be 'target audience' and it is the role of the teacher to tell and decide what to be learned. The Apprenticeship conception of teaching is based upon the belief that there exists a body of established wisdom and knowledge that is to be handed down from an 'expert' to novices. The teacher is to be a model for the learners to emulate. The third conception of teaching, Developmental, is based on the belief that individuals possess the potential for intellectual development in the forms of complex thought and reasoning. The role of a teacher is to guide and facilitate learning. The Nurturing conception of teaching is characterized by a teacher's concern with establishing a caring and interpersonal relationship with the learners so as to facilitate learning. Finally, the Social Reform conception of teaching is characterized by an explicitly stated 'ideal' or set of principles held by a teacher. Teaching process is framed from within a conviction that this 'ideal' is appropriate for all and necessary for a better society (Pratt, 1992).

#### Instrument Construction

A total of 150 item statements were developed to operationalize the five dominant conceptions of teaching. A 6-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree was used. Items in the instrument were initially derived from a pool of draft statements developed by Dan Pratt. Over a period of time, additional items were developed based on the researcher's understanding of the five conceptions of teaching as well as from discussion and feedback from fellow colleagues who were familiar with Pratt's dominant conceptions of teaching. Throughout the development of the items, the researcher continuously sought the assistance of Pratt, Boshier and others to validate the items. For each aspect (that is,, action, intention, and belief) of the conception of teaching, at least 10 items were developed. Item statements were constructed to reflect the elements and their relationships of the general model of teaching. However, for each aspect within the conception, the number of item statements reflecting the elements were not uniform, as elements and their relationships varied substantially in terms of importance, focus and centrality. Table 1 gives a summary of the initial breakdown of item statements for each conception of teaching. In the final version of



the instrument, the items for all the five conceptions of teaching were randomly arranged and categorized under the following stems:

When teaching, I.....(Action)

When teaching, I try to.....(Intention)

As a teacher, I believe that.....(Belief)

Table 1

| Conceptions of teaching | Learners- Content | Learners- Teacher | Teacher- Content |
|-------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Engineering             | 10                | 9                 | 11               |
| Apprenticeship          | 8                 | 12                | 10               |
| Developmental           | 9                 | 16                | 5                |
| Nurturing               | 2                 | 27                | 1                |
| Social Reform           | 6                 | 17                | 7                |

#### Validity Tests

Test validity according to McMillan and Schumacher (1989) 'is the extent to which inferences made on the basis of scores from an instrument are appropriate, meaningful, and useful' (p 169). In other words, the validity of the test is the extent to which the instrument actually measures what it purports to measure. Validity tests on face and content were determined by getting Dan Pratt to examine the items and to make the necessary modifications or additions to the items. Next, the items were evaluated by the researcher's peers who were familiar with the conceptions of teaching and had the experience to determine the appropriateness and meaningfulness of the items.

A group of 10 'judges' (graduate students in adult education who had taken a course on 'conception Of Teaching' conducted by Dan Pratt) were asked to sort the items into five categories reflecting the conceptions of teaching. Items with more than 80 percent in agreement with a particular conception were retained. On the other hand, items which failed to meet this criterion were reviewed.

Since there were no other instruments which measure similar conceptions of teaching pure criterion related measure was not attempted. Concurrent and predictive validity tests were also not carried out because the CTS scale was developed solely for the present study.

### Reliability Tests

Reliability test refers to the 'consistency of measurement, the extent to which the results are similar over different forms of the same measurement or occasions of data collections' (McMillan and Schumacher, 1989, p 168). According to Kerlinger (1973), reliability refers to the accuracy or precision of the a measuring instrument. The purpose of reliability measures is to minimize the influence of chance or other variables unrelated to the intent of the instrument.

Test-retest reliability over a 4-week interval was carried out among a group of 30 adult students taking adult education courses. The same instrument was administered twice to the same group. These students came from varied backgrounds and many had experience in teaching adults in one form or another. The test-retest reliability coefficients for the five sub-scales of conceptions of teaching ranged from moderate to high.

A split-half reliability coefficients or coefficients of internal consistency were determined for the five sub-scales of the CTS. The reliability coefficients from the test-retest and internal consistency were considered high, indicating that the instrument was reliable.

### Conclusion

The results indicate that the CTS is a valid and reliable instrument to assess instructors' conceptions of teaching. The instrument should also be of interest to researchers interested in cross-cultural study on teaching. The instrument could also be used to investigate the relationship between conceptions of teaching and teaching styles.

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## **The Experience of Consciousness-raising in Abused Women**

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This study suggests a process by which battered women experience emancipatory learning. The participants identify three themes common to a definition of consciousness-raising, i.e., a sense of personal power, realization of societal power, and action. This qualitative research process draws upon feminist research, participatory research and grounded theory method.

### **Introduction**

The study is informed by a feminist and critical perspective, drawing heavily on the work of feminist pedagogy (and other feminists) and liberation pedagogy (primarily Paulo Freire). Both are drawn from a radical philosophy of social change in which, oppression and marginalization are openly acknowledged, personal lives and social systems are viewed dialectically as political issues, and critical consciousness is required for liberation from oppression. This framework provides the basis from which the research question is drawn, methodology chosen and the problem of battered women considered. Therefore, abuse towards women is viewed through a socio-political analysis of patriarchy, i.e., violence towards women in their personal lives is analyzed as a political and public issue directly related to the domination of women by men (Hart, 1985; MacLeod, 1987; Schechter, 1982). Likewise, it is assumed that an experience of conscientization or consciousness-raising contributes to personal and social change.

Adult educators concerned with social change view consciousness-raising and conscientization as emancipatory learning phenomena. Much can be learned about such learning processes from battered women who have begun to look critically at their oppression. This study is an attempt to enhance understanding of this experience of consciousness-raising in abused women. In other words, what is the process whereby some women who have been battered gain the power to understand this violence as a social problem and act to make changes in society?

### **The Power of Language**

Probably nowhere is language more obviously a tool of power and authority than in situations where it has been used to control or contain victims. The definition of abuse therefore becomes a political act. The terms 'abused' and 'battered' are used interchangeably in this study. The definition adopted by the Canadian Advisory Council of the Status of Women (MacLeod, 1987) is used because it reflects both the theoretical framework discussed above and the participants' real-life understanding of their own abuse. That is, "wife battering is violence, physical, and/or psychological, expressed by a husband or a male or lesbian lover, to which the 'wife' does not consent, and which is directly or indirectly condoned by the traditions, laws and attitudes prevalent in the society in which it occurs" (p. 13).

After exposure to the language of the women for a few months, I began to realize the power with which they infuse the word 'advocacy.' It is a word that is oft-repeated in this paper and so requires some explanation in the women's own words. Advocacy is "to educate society about what this [abuse] does to women... to help other people see that they can speak up for what they believe in and trust it." "It can be as minor as you doing it for yourself or as big as you want it to be...reach as wide an audience as you want." It includes "informing women, but not just women, other people" and "...not accepting it [abuse] for yourself either...then it progresses to role-modeling for your children and the people you come in contact with....changing society..."

Use of the first person in academic writing is a risky endeavour but consciously chosen and grounded in feminist theory. Maguire (1987), also studying battered women, states that "to strive for a detached stance puts the feminist researcher in a contradictory position...[which] expects her to describe other women's oppression while ignoring her own" (p. 88-89). Writing in the first person is an attempt to situate myself, as an abused woman, in the research experience and to honor my personal journey through this research, as well.



## Methodology

The study participants are abused women who have actively participated in social change efforts in the area of battered women through public education or self-help programs. These women had previously participated in an agency-based abused women's support/educational program (referred to as the Three Phase Program) and a mutual help drop-in centre for abused women. The four women were successively chosen in purposive sampling through contact with the women and the social worker over a number of months. This followed initial contact with the civic agency which runs the support/educational program and co-sponsors the drop-in centre. At the invitation and ongoing encouragement of the agency social worker (Derwyn), I became unexpectedly involved in a variety of activities related to battered women in conjunction with other women and the social worker. These included attendance at the drop-in centre regularly (including involvement in mutual planning and facilitation), participation as a community volunteer in the agency's support program and public education. Although these activities were not intended to be part of the research study, the information and emotions generated in these contacts became inextricably linked with the data obtained from the research participants.

Consistent with a feminist and critical philosophy, the research process became increasingly participatory as time unfolded. Derwyn had immediately connected me with one of the women who had initiated the drop-in centre (Michelle). Subsequently, Derwyn and Michelle became co-researchers with whom I met regularly to discuss the research question, design and participant selection. Original methodological decisions were changed or adapted in discussions with these women. For example, I originally envisioned observing the women in their advocacy roles. However, after observing Michelle, we jointly determined that this was marginally useful and highly stressful due to the potentially judgmental quality of the experience. Instead, we decided to pursue more in-depth interviewing of a story-telling nature. Later, mutual discussion also led to a decision to invite the research participants to participate in a group dialogue. All of the women were involved in participatory analysis during the group sessions as we reflected on emerging themes from the individual interviews and they discovered others through the group dialogue. They were also invited to contribute to the written work in a variety of ways. For example, each woman chose her own pseudonym and wrote her own one page story for inclusion in the thesis document; research papers and thesis chapters were shared for feedback and critique.

The interviews were a dialogic, collaborative attempt to understand the women's lived experience and their own interpretations relative to the research question. The first interview was unstructured, except for a general explanation of the research question and a suggestion to begin with "your own story of abuse." The second interview included elaboration, clarification and verification as well as further story-telling. This also occurred during the two group interviews; while the first focused more on information to date, the second brought in new material that was reviewed in continued telephone contact with the participants. The group sessions occurred twice, after two interviews with each participant (with one exception).

Data analysis was a dynamic and ongoing process that included intuition, dialogue and coding procedures (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) alternating between inductive and deductive analysis. I transcribed the individual and group interviews verbatim and shared these with those participants who expressed time and interest. Themes which emerged across the transcripts were verified in the group. However, the group dialogue and mutuality led to an exciting experience of spiralling down deeper into the data beyond verification so that together we entered into the data in new ways, new insights were revealed and action was demanded. This is reminiscent of Fox's comment (cited in Lather, 1991) "the heart of the idea of empowerment involves people coming into a sense of their own power, a new relationship with their own contexts" (p. 4). One of the women has a visceral experience of this power which drives her towards social action. She believes that the research experience has contributed to this enlightenment.

What might have facilitated this empowering analytical experience? Firstly, the women, including myself, are all experienced group members, know each other and are committed to both personal and social change. Secondly, the process of an intimate, equal and feminist exploration had already been established in the individual interviews and in their previous experiences with the agency and drop-in centre. Thirdly, the women themselves articulated the power of the group:

S: I think it's easier to get more ideas out in a group.

J: Yeah, 'cause we feed each other.

M: And sometimes you say something that you wouldn't say on your own 'cause you don't know if it matters, if it's valid...where a group gets you in touch with what you either had hidden or forgotten or just said wasn't important...needed that contact and equalness and validity, maybe.

And they talk openly about the need to use their stories and the information generated in this research to advocate in society; "I'm also hoping...that it's an awareness, an awakening for somebody else out there..."

### Participants

The four women range in age from 28 to 43, were married for 8 to 17 years and had left their abusive marriages from 1 to 8 years previously. None of the women have post-secondary education; Joan is presently doing high school upgrading while the others are employed in administrative support positions. All of the participants have suffered various forms of abuse from their husbands even after leaving them, have been involved with society's legal and social service systems and are committed to advocacy in one form or another.

Michelle and Joan were victims of severe physical, emotional, psychological, sexual and economic abuse for about 15 years. Both, undereducated and isolated, were housebound for most of this time. Both were almost killed by their husbands the day they left the abusive relationship. Today, both are vocal, assertive advocates for themselves, their children and other women. In addition to public education, Michelle started the drop-in centre and is now a leader in a battered women's program. Shelley describes financial, emotional and psychological abuse which includes name-calling and other forms of humiliation, withdrawal/refusal of affection or personal contact and threats of physical violence. She reports being fearful and angry for most of her marriage. Shelley only recently completed the Three Phase Program and has been out of her relationship for just over one year. She, however, has found new energy and excitement about sharing her story through public education activities and assisting in the formation of a second drop-in centre. Cindy's long-term marriage included physical and emotional abuse. She has ongoing pain about her young teenage children's decision to stay with their father in caretaking roles. She recently remarried. Cindy, a more quiet and introverted woman, provides one-to-one support to others, discusses abuse in the workplace and has volunteered in the Three Phase Program.

### Findings

Theme analysis reveals three major categories: (1) a changing consciousness about their individual lives, including a sense of power and control not previously experienced ("an awakening"), (2) an emerging social consciousness that allows them to analyze their own and others' abuse differently ("the societal thing"), and (3) a desire to act against the violence in society ("advocacy"). These women's words echo the three components of consciousness-raising as articulated by Hart (1990).

The full cycle of consciousness raising therefore includes the actual experience of power on the individual level, a theoretical grasp of power as a larger social reality, and a practical orientation toward emancipatory action. (p. 70-71)

Firstly, much of the individual stories indicate a changing internal consciousness or **awakening** that was most palpable during the months which preceded the women's choice to leave their abusive relationships. This was played out most strikingly in three shared themes: the recollection of one highly significant violent incident, concern for the children and contact with other people, particularly women.

All of the women related one unsolicited violent situation to me during their first interview. In each case, the situation was vividly recalled in extensive detail. As a group, they speculated that the event was particularly significant for a variety of reasons. For instance, the participants recalled being terrified by their husbands during this event, whether this occurred before or after leaving him: "I knew he was gonna kill me" or "it was the first time I thought he would actually hit me and I wouldn't be around to tell about it." Also, after years of having their sanity, their

intelligence, their inner truths battered and almost destroyed, they suddenly became aware that "he is the crazy one - not me." Cindy surmises that "why we remember it so vividly is we said this is the last time... 'cause you'll never do it to me again." Their awareness and resolve is highlighted in the calmness which pervaded their actions immediately after the abuse. Both Michelle and Joan went to work, made arrangements to go to a women's shelter and ensure that the children understood what was happening. Joan relates her calm return to the house from the car to "wash my face;" more surprisingly perhaps she expressed concern about her husband's inadequate dress in cold weather. Cindy needed to take herself to the hospital and file a police report. Shelley returned to her home and organized assistance to remove her belongings immediately.

Three of the violent incidents that were shared during the first interviews occurred in a car; Michelle later related an incident which also occurred in a car. Again, the women were asked to speculate on the significance, if any, of this common theme. They believed that the car was related to their own increasing sense of independence, power and control. Likewise, they knew that their husbands were threatened by this. "Well, for me, the car was a threat against him. That was my escape...my sense of control and freedom."

For some time before leaving, the three women who had children also began to see their children's lives and potential futures more clearly. Joan was confronted by her four sons' increasingly abusive behaviour towards herself and each other. Contrastingly, each woman became conscious of their children's protective roles in the family and did not want this "life sentence" for their children. Michelle and Joan worried about the models that were being provided to their children about perpetrating and accepting abuse of men towards women and children. The younger Shelley purposely chose not to have children because she "did not want to be a single parent" (due to her husband's physical and psychological distance.)

All of these retrospective speculations, when viewed thematically, share common elements pointing to an new consciousness which emerged despite the continued domination and control of these women by their abusive partners. At that moment of truth following the final act of violence, they saw themselves as important enough and powerful enough to make a different choice. Although they could not have articulated this at the time, they now have the ability to name the experience more clearly. This dialectical reflection between Michelle and Shelley clearly highlights this point.

M: I think it was this awakening in me that I have control, I have some power to do something for me...

S: I think it's the assumption of your power, you finally regain control of your power...

M: I don't even know if it was regaining control of my own power, it was an awareness that I had some...

S: A belief that you had the choice.

All of the women recognized that these new understandings which contributed to their leaving were precipitated by a number of other important factors. Most pivotal was their contact with other women who had a significant impact on them, but for differing reasons. Both Joan and Michelle had returned to the workforce after many "housebound" years. From their women co-workers, they gained a sense of a different world, different possibilities ("a life out there and...I wanted a piece of this") and a notion of the wrongness of their abuse ("...tried to tell me that that was wrong, 'cause they saw the bruises.") They describe the support they obtained in a variety of ways: "gave her a chance to spread her wings," "view that it can be done," "strength from listening." Michelle summarizes: "When I went to work, I didn't even realize that the women in my office were my first support group."

The women articulate this as the beginning of a change in their worldview and their view of themselves. Subsequently, each began to challenge their husbands in small, subtle ways learning some of the safer ways to do this after receiving violent reactions initially. For example, Michelle attempted to verbally defy her husband's chosen dinner time by 15 minutes. When this was met with abusive behaviour towards her, she responded with silent defiance and put the dinner on the table 15 minutes later anyway. For her, this seemingly small action was empowering. Michelle clearly articulates, however, that as she became more independent, her husband became more

desperate in his attempts to control her, leading eventually to his attempt to kill her which resulted in her final decision to leave.

Cindy and Shelley relate also, however, a different experience with other women. Both of them were witnessing an abusive relationship of a friend and sister, respectively. Cindy states: "And I started to dislike her because the more I seen of her, the more I seen of myself in her." Shelley, on the other hand, became angry at her spouse for berating the behaviour of the sister's boyfriend while conducting the same behaviour himself.

Both situations might be described in terms of a mirror. The supportive women in the workplace provide a reflection of Joan and Michelle's rights and choices; while the friend/sister reflect the denied abusive reality. Again both reflect a changing consciousness; a different way of looking at the same reality.

The second category developed by these women is the development of a social consciousness, **the societal thing**, including a new sense of collectivity. At some point after leaving (usually not long after), each of these women became involved in either the drop-in centre or the Three Phase Program and sometimes other group experiences as well (e.g., ACOA). It was here that they saw that other women shared their experience of abuse, their pain and their shame. They came to realize that the "abuse is not your fault; you are a victim" and that abuse of women is a societal problem "bigger than us." Throughout each woman's story and the group dialogue, they weave comments indicative of an awareness of the societal context which supports their abuse. Economic dependence was the focus of considerable discussion in the second interview. Moving between the private and the public, the dialogue shifted from the "humiliating" experience of wearing old and oft-repaired underwear to the statistics which indicate women's economic status in society. They each could identify patterns in their own and their spouse's families of origin which supported messages that men hold power while wives and children do not.

The third element, action, for these women is in the form of **advocacy** as they define it. Joan immediately takes action:

You know, when I left that little community...I let as many people know that I was gone. That way the word gets around and these women say "well, gee, she left, maybe I can leave, too."

Shelley insightfully points out "so, you were doing advocacy already." I quickly learned that these women have an innate understanding or recognition of the early feminist axiom "the personal is political." Even when they identify social systems, they personalize the experience. Additionally, they attribute equal importance to changing their families, communities and social worlds. For them, advocacy is something that is expressed "in my everyday life." Yet, it is highly political in that they envision a changed world. Michelle, the most visible and experienced of these advocates, explains why she feels compelled to this type of action.

I'm getting greedier, and I'm impatient, and I want things to go faster because I really do not want any more women than there already are in situations where they think they're worthless and they're going to die.

### **Conclusions and implications**

What do these courageous and powerful women tell us about emancipatory learning? They remind us of both the appalling reality of violent oppression in our lives as women and the optimism of our humanity. They describe a process whereby their consciousness was raised. In each case, an important trigger was breaking the silence and engaging in dialogue with others in some form or another. Contradictions are revealed which cause them to gain the "inner strength" to challenge their situations until they come to a conscious recognition of their own worth and power. In their workplace groups, they gain a sense of the possibility of difference, while in their support groups, they are faced with the oppressive reality of their similarities. In further dialogue, supported by feminist analysis, they then recognize the societal nature of their private experiences. During this shared breaking of silence, "the previously idiosyncratic or private experience of misery is now de-privatized by being recognized as a symptom of oppression" (Hart, 1990, p. 55). This precipitates a desire for action. These women are advocates across a broad spectrum of private and public activities, giving equal significance to each.



For each of us, it is important that this study be used for further advocacy against violence and toward empowerment. Although a plan has not been established at this writing, the participants and the social worker are committed to disseminating the information obtained. The women continually state that sharing their individual and collective stories are important ways of educating or supporting others.

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CHANGING COURSE:  
INITIATING THE TRANSFORMATIONAL LEARNING PROCESS

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Abstract: This study analyzed the initiating events of nine transformational learning experiences. Two types of initiators were found: the disorienting dilemma as described by Mezirow, and the integrating circumstance. How each functions to begin the transformational process is also discussed.

Like a river, a life course seldom maintains a single trajectory but instead shifts and turns at various critical points. These changes are the stuff of novelists and developmental theorists, not to mention being of some import to those of us living them, and part of what makes them intriguing is the complexity behind such changes. What's going on here? What factors or influences redirect both the river and the life course at those various points? And how do they work together to change the flow?

There is a fair amount of literature that addresses various dimensions of change in the life course, especially work in adult development. In our own field this issue is addressed in the literature on transformational learning, particularly the work of Mezirow (1978; 1981; 1990; 1991). His empirical study of women's re-entry programs in community colleges (Mezirow, 1978) gave rise to his theory of perspective transformation, the process by which meaning structures undergo change. Mezirow noted that these changes are precipitated by a disorienting dilemma. Initially Mezirow equates these disorienting dilemmas with life crises (1978, p.7), but he later extends that definition to include a range of external events, all of which induce change: "Anomalies and dilemmas of which old ways of knowing cannot make sense become catalysts or 'trigger events' that precipitate critical reflection and transformations" (1990, p.14). However, this is not the only way perspective transformation occurs; Mezirow argues that the process can also be gradual, occurring "by a series of transitions which permit one to revise specific assumptions about oneself and others until the very structure of assumptions becomes transformed. This is perhaps a more common pattern of development" (1981, p.7-8). But Mezirow suggests in his recent book (1991) that even this gradual process is moved forward by engagement with smaller dilemmas that present a "challenge to an established perspective" (p.168).

The actual process of perspective transformation has not yet been extensively studied. Of particular interest is how perspective transformation begins. Does the initiating event always function as a disorienting dilemma? Are there other possibilities? Whatever the initiator, how exactly does it work to set the process of change in motion?

These were the questions I addressed in a qualitative study of nine adults who identified a learning experience that had changed their lives. The experiences themselves varied widely, to include recovering from alcoholism, making a religious commitment, becoming a parent late in life or marrying late, adjusting to physical disability, becoming a feminist, changing racial attitudes, and dealing with sexual harassment. This was a retrospective study; all participants had these experiences earlier in life, from two to more than 25 years before. All were articulate, reflective, and self-aware and thus able to access the transformative experience and describe it in detail. I conducted in-depth interviews lasting about two hours with each adult, then did follow-up interviews of about an hour with four of them; all interviews were tape recorded and transcribed. These data were analyzed using both the phenomenological and heuristic methods in order to obtain a complex, in-depth understanding of the subjective experience of the participants.

The nine participants in my study shared a common process in their learning. Most broadly, all spoke of a dramatic before-and-after in their lives; for each it was easy to measure a significant change in their circumstances both externally and internally. Each could also identify a specific event which initiated the change. In my analysis of the process of the learning, I focused particularly on these initiating events and the ways in which they were experienced by the participants. By understanding how these events functioned in the learning process, I was able to assess how the meaning systems of the participants were challenged and restructured. It is here that the restructuring of meaning became visible. I saw the initiating event, therefore, as the fulcrum of the transformational learning process.

I found two types of initiating events in my study. The first is the disorienting dilemma, as described by Mezirow; it presents a serious challenge to life as the person has known it. The second type I have called the integrating circumstance, an event which provides a missing and yet sought after piece in the person's life. I will describe one example of each type of initiating event, then discuss how that event func-

tioned to set the transformational learning process in motion.

John, 68 years old at the time of his interview, spoke of his recovery from alcoholism eleven years before. He described himself during his drinking years as "really a bastard," someone who dominated other people and was once sued by one of his employees "for acting in lieu of God." His drinking effectively isolated him from other people. When he was forced to retire for health reasons at 57, his drinking and his isolation increased. He describes the day his family confronted him:

This happened on a Saturday. I was going to give the awards presentation for [a local foundation] ...so that morning I got up and took a shower and poured a martini around 10 o'clock in the morning. Two of my children were around and they said, "Why are you drinking at this hour?" And I said, "I have to give a talk at noon and I'll stutter if I don't," and they just got on my case. Then I poured a second martini and went up to my room and locked the door.

He gave the talk, then went on to help with a local fund drive, a chicken sale for the heart foundation.

About 3 o'clock my son drove into the parking lot. I said, "What are you doing here, Dave?" and he said, "You're here messing around with a bunch of chickens while at home your family's dying!" I said, "Oh, bullshit!" So I went in and I told them, "I've got some kind of problem at home." So I left and came home. And they sat around the table in the family room and just laid it out, an intervention....They said, "You're an alcoholic.. ..You have to do something about it"....And that night I went to an AA meeting.

John admits that he had mixed motivations for going to the AA meeting: "It was to get them off my back. But I was at a stage where I was ready....I was 'sick and tired of being sick and tired.'" His first meeting was a failure, though; he just couldn't identify with anything he heard or saw. But when he went again the next night, he was surprised to see a minister he knew, as well as one of his employees. "I was just dumb-founded; just couldn't understand it. As a result of that, I started listening to what was happening." After about a week he began to recognize what his drinking had done to his life and that these people could show him how to change. He began working the program, which is to say putting the principles of



Alcoholics Anonymous into action, and his transformation was underway.

We see in this case some general characteristics of a disorienting dilemma. First, it presents a threat or rupture of the person's life fabric. That rupture is sudden and very serious. John, dependent on alcohol to function, could not even imagine life without drinking. Second, it causes the person to reevaluate and reinterpret their past experience in light of this new event. When confronted by his family, John was forced to see that his drinking over the years had hurt himself and them. Finally, the disorienting dilemma demands some immediate action from the person. Thrown off balance, they must do something to regain equilibrium; and since the old ways have been challenged, this means trying something radically new. For John that meant embracing the radical way of life offered by AA. The disorienting dilemma, therefore, triggers the transformational learning process in a dramatic way, setting it in motion.

In contrast to the abrupt and dramatic appearance of the disorienting dilemma, the integrating circumstance occurs after and seems to be the culmination of an earlier stage of exploration and searching which prepares the person for the learning to follow. This is an indefinite period in which the person consciously or unconsciously searches for something which is missing in their life; when they find this 'missing piece,' the transformational learning process is catalyzed.

Rosa, a woman of 39 at the time of the interview, spoke of her development as a feminist. She discussed two elements in her life which she had struggled unsuccessfully for years to unite conceptually: her intellect and her desire to nurture. Feminism as she understood it then was no solution because, while it supported women's achievement, it distanced women from traditional roles of nurturing. She sought a way to integrate these elements of her experience; the missing piece for her was a framework to hold these otherwise discordant elements together.

Rosa's integrating circumstance consisted of three events. The first, what she called "the seed," was the birth of her first child. When she was in the delivery room in the final stages of labor, she kept kicking the stirrups over when she bore down. The nurse and doctor said to her, "God, you're strong! No other woman has done this!" While she couldn't respond at the time, she was overwhelmed with feeling: "I was furious that they would put down other women to make me feel bet-

ter....I felt in labor that I was connected to all other women who'd ever done this."

The second event was pivotal. She met an English woman who was a professor and a feminist. Felicity spent a week with Rosa and they had long conversations about women's concerns in both countries. Felicity said she was appalled by the condition of the women's movement in the United States, and in reply Rosa tried to tell her why she was not a feminist:

I told her that I didn't want to be cut off from other women who chose to be at home...that I didn't want to go fly off into the world of men, competing with them....I don't know exactly what I said but that's what I imagine I said. And she said, "Well, that is what it means to be a feminist." She essentially gave me an intellectual understanding of what I experienced when I was having my child, that of this connection to women, whatever they do and wherever they are.

The encounter with Felicity was so energizing that Rosa decided to begin work on her doctorate the next fall. One of the first courses she took was in women's studies and she described it as "a continuation and elaboration" of her conversations with Felicity. It constituted the third event of her integrating circumstance. Here she developed further an understanding of feminism, one which she described as helping "reconcile some different aspects of my personality."

Rosa used the image of an integrating structure to describe her learning process:

All these experiences...were floating sort of aimlessly around....Then talking to Felicity was like building a toothpick scaffold which then these pieces had someplace to go. And then taking the course fleshed this toothpick structure out into a more complex, sturdy building or structure. And then all these things that had been floating had someplace to live.

The integrating circumstance seems to function as a trigger event in a very different way from the disorienting dilemma. First, it appears not as a sudden, life-threatening rupture but rather as an opportunity for exploration and development. It invites rather than threatens. Rosa welcomed Felicity and all she represented into her life. Second, the integrating circumstance helps to clarify past experience rather than triggering a reevaluation of those experiences. Rosa was particularly explicit about this, comparing it

to a set of opera glasses: "Finally you can see what's there." Lastly, rather than demanding action, the integrating circumstance seems to lure the person in, drawing him or her to greater depths of understanding and personal growth. For Rosa that meant a new synthesis of two important aspects of her identity that sparked further growth.

Although functioning in distinctly different ways, both types of initiating events lead to the restructuring of meaning at some level and thus to a personal transformation. The disorienting dilemma appears to come from outside the person, throwing them off track and reordering their world. They are, in that sense, being acted upon. The integrating circumstance, however, appears to originate within the person in that their conscious or unconscious desire to find something that's missing from their life opens them for change. In that sense they are acting rather than being acted upon. This suggests that transformational learning need not be disruptive; the restructuring of meaning can result from orienting as well as disorienting experiences. Yet to be determined is if the transformational learning process differs in each case, and future research is needed to address that question.

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## Measuring Teaching Effectiveness for Native American Learners

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### Abstract

Tribal colleges offer the most hopeful opportunity for quality higher education among Native Americans. To assist in improving teaching effectiveness, an instrument is being developed based upon teaching and learning information generated from field-based interviews with tribal college students. This instrument is designed for completion by students for judging their teacher's effectiveness.

### Tribal Colleges

While effective teaching is a concern among all segments of the population, it is a vital issue among minority groups who are experiencing higher education for the first time. For many Native Americans, this first exposure to post-secondary education occurs at tribally controlled community colleges. These nontraditional students usually live within the reservation boundaries, tend to be considerably older than traditional students, and are often poor women with children. They are often the first in their families to attend college (Boyer, 1989, p. 30). Lacking in personal and family educational experiences and burdened by many competing outside obligations (p. 3), these Native Americans are in dire need of effective teachers to help them stay in school and to succeed in the challenging tasks of higher education.

Tribally controlled community colleges are a network of Native American colleges which provide education and community services on Indian reservations. Of the twenty-four colleges, seven are located in Montana. These tribal colleges have the dual task of providing higher education while also maintaining the indigenous culture of the Native people. Consequently, the tribe's culture is deeply ingrained into the curriculum (Windy Boy, 1990), and effective teaching involves cultural as well as traditional academic activities. Because of the influence these colleges are having in fostering change in the Native American communities and because of their role in empowering Native people, the recent special Carnegie report, which was entitled *Tribal Colleges: Shaping the Future of Native America* (Boyer, 1989), stressed that the tribally controlled community colleges are "crucial to the future of Native Americans, and of our nation" (p. 3) because these colleges offer "a route for Indian people to reach greater equality and more constructive interchange with the larger world" (p. 25). For Native Americans, "the tribal colleges act as a bridge between the Indian and Anglo worlds. Students looking for greater emotional and academic support can turn to a tribal college, after negative experience elsewhere, rather than simply dropping out of higher education" (p. 31).

Although the hope for higher education in the Indian community rests heavily on the tribal colleges, the tribal colleges have had some staffing difficulties (pp. 32-34). Like most teachers who have entered teaching with little or no knowledge about instruction and learning, the staff lack training in effective teaching, and the administration has no organized methods for assessing effective teaching. These deficiencies hinder hiring and promoting processes and limit targeted staff development activities. Because of these conditions, one of the Carnegie report's major recommendations was "the establishment of a comprehensive program for faculty development at tribal colleges" (pp. 82-83).

Tribal colleges are community institutions (p. xii). To operate efficiently and to fulfill their potential, they need a way to identify effective teaching. The identification of teaching behaviors can serve as the basis for indigenous professional development and for locally based classroom research on teaching. However, the development of means for evaluating this effectiveness must be grounded in the understanding that "people cannot be torn from their cultural roots without harm" (p. xiii). Thus, the mainstream literature on teaching effectiveness



and existing instruments can provide general guidelines for developing measurements of teaching effectiveness for Native Americans, but the final measures must reflect the culture of Indian people.

### Teaching Effectiveness

Much of the past research on college teaching effectiveness has been based on student evaluations of teaching behavior. While the debate is heated in the field concerning the validity of this type of evaluation and of the relationship of these evaluations to other classroom variables, students tend to value teachers who present material clearly (Marques, Lane, & Dorfman, 1979) and who are democratic and accessible (Uranowitz & Doyle, 1978). Some general models of teaching effectiveness have focused on carefully structuring objectives (Hunter, 1976) and on monitoring feedback to students (Brophy & Evertson, 1981). Others have argued that college teaching is an art (Eble, 1976; 1983) and that it should include an interpersonal dimension as well as an intellectual dimension (Lowman, 1984). In the search to better understand effective teaching, several things have been done: general models for effective teaching have been discussed in the literature, the types of college students have been categorized (Mann & Others, 1970), motivational factors have been analyzed (Wlodkowski, 1985), the impact of learning on the student has been studied (Daloz, 1986), and teaching tips have been offered (McKeachie, 1978). However, in this general quest, teaching effectiveness models which incorporate specific cultural diversity are scarce.

The availability of existing measurement instruments for use with specific cultural groups is equally rare. Many of the teaching effectiveness instruments developed for use with adults and higher education deal with isolated areas of teaching or specific content areas. For example, several instruments are available for measuring such topics as student teaching (e.g., Profiles of Teaching Competency or Student Teacher Competencies) or adult basic education (e.g., Adult Basic Education Teacher Competency Inventory or Classroom Interaction Rating Form). Others concentrate on teacher traits such as the instructor's philosophy (e.g., Orientation to Learning) or the teacher's ability to overcome obstacles and achieve goals (e.g., Teacher Self Efficacy Instrument) while others focus on classroom behaviors such as signals sent by the teacher to students (e.g., Invitational Teaching Survey) or the teacher's effectiveness as a lecturer (e.g., Cornell Inventory for Student Appraisal of Teaching and Courses). Many self-rating scales exist (e.g., My Thoughts: A Self-Evaluation Instrument) for identifying either individual traits or those of various members of the instructional team (e.g., Competency Based Teacher Evaluation Guide). Some (e.g., Students' Evaluation of Professor's Effectiveness or Teacher Communication Style) focus on the intellectual and interpersonal dimensions similar to those suggested by Lowman (1984) while others attempt to be more comprehensive (e.g., Student's Evaluation of Educational Quality). Although several use paired adjectives (e.g., Ideal Teacher Questionnaire or Tuckman Teacher Feedback Form), Jung's theories have served as the conceptual basis for some instruments (e.g., Teaching Style Inventory or The TLC Learning Style Inventory), and others have been generated with student input (e.g., Student's Evaluation of Professor's Effectiveness). Although portions of instruments from these sources might be useful for evaluating teaching effectiveness at tribal colleges, none reflects either the cultural backgrounds which many Native Americans have experienced in schooling, the diverse composition of the tribal college student population, or the special situational needs of the tribal colleges. The continued self-determination of Indian people at their tribal colleges requires that they participate in developing their own measures of teaching effectiveness which are grounded in their own tribal colleges.

### Learning at the Tribal Colleges

A database for constructing an indigenously developed teaching effectiveness instrument for tribal colleges was developed from an extensive joint project in which the seven tribal colleges in Montana and the Center for Adult Learning Research at Montana State University

cooperated in gathering research data on Native American learning. With the support of the administration and faculty at all seven colleges, the Center's staff and research interns from each college collected learning style information on 693 students at the colleges. Of this group, 566 were Native Americans. In addition, teaching-style scores were obtained on 80 faculty members at these colleges. In the first phase of this study, the impact of learning style and teaching style upon student academic achievement was examined (Conti, 1990, pp. 13- 15; Conti & Fellenz, 1988a). In the second phase, 73 students with unique learning style profiles were interviewed. In-depth, open-ended interviews produced data about the things good teachers did to help them learn and about barriers that bad teachers constructed which hindered their learning (Conti & Fellenz, 1988b).

In addition to producing a list of characteristics of good and bad teaching behaviors which are grounded in the actual learning experiences of Native American students, the study produced data which provided operational definitions and justifications for these behaviors and provided insights for how these behaviors related to the Indian culture. For example, the Native American culture supports a tradition of listening to elders, who are authority figures, for insightful information. This is often related to the Indian's tendency to remain silent in many classes. Yet, in the formal classroom situation, numerous students talked about the way good teachers handled questions. Good teachers allow students to ask questions any time they are needed, make the student feel good about asking the questions, answer the question and then ask the student for feedback to check to see if the answer is meaningful to the student, and allow the student to ask the question as many times and in as many formats as necessary to get the information needed. Students watch the way the teacher handles questions which are asked by other students. If the teacher does not immediately indicate an openness to receiving questions and a humaneness in answering them, students will refrain from asking questions. The handling of questions is the first and most important evaluation criterion that students have of teachers; with this they are able to make judgments about the quality of teachers at the first meeting. Teachers are tagged as "good" the first day; those that are "bad" are labeled by this criterion within the first week. Thus, the cultural trait for listening and the effective teacher behavior combine to create a situation affecting student learning.

Why is a knowledge and comprehensive description such as this important to teachers of Native American students? Teachers should know this because the responses of the Indian students indicated that this questioning is their major way for participating in a formal learning situation. This converts them from passive, receivers of knowledge to active learners. While the adult education literature from Lindeman (1926) to Brookfield (1986) is replete with exhortations of active participation as the basic foundational principle of adult learning, teachers need to identify their personal actions which may influence the degree of a student's active participation.

#### Development of Items

The purpose of this study was to develop a valid and reliable instrument for measuring teacher effectiveness with adult Native American students which can be easily used by classroom teachers and which is based upon field-generated teacher characteristics from interview data with Native American students. The instrument was designed for direct use with students. The design for the development of this instrument was similar to that use for the Principles of Adult Learning Scale which has been used in over 25 dissertation studies.

Data from the interviews were organized into four broad categories. These were Questioning, Zest for Life, Mutual Respect, and Love of Teaching. Items which described actual classroom behaviors were written to reflect the characteristics described by the students, and students rate the frequency with which their teacher practice the defined behavior. Responses are on a six-point Likert-type scale with the options of Always, Almost Always, Often, Seldom, Almost Never, and Never.

## Validity

The development of a measurement instrument involves the establishment of the validity and reliability of the items which are written. Validity is concerned with what a test actually measures (Kerlinger, 1973, p. 457). "Unless we have a fairly adequate answer to this question [of what does this test measure], any test will be useless in our attempts to deal wisely with human beings--adults or children" (Tyler & Walsh, 1979, p.28). While there are several types of validity, the three most important types recognized in educational research are construct, content, and criterion-related validity (Kerlinger, 1973, p. 457). These may be established in a variety of ways; however, they should be compatible with the overall purpose of the test (Borg & Gall, 1983, p. 275; Van Dalen, 1979, pp. 135-136). Because establishing validity is essential to the credibility of any test and because it involves several steps, "the validation of a test is a long *process* rather than a single event" (Tyler & Walsh, 1979, p. 29). After the validity of the items of the instrument have been established, the instrument's overall reliability can be determined.

Construct validity assesses the underlying theory of the instrument. It is the extent to which the instrument can be shown to measure hypothetical constructs which explain some aspect of human behavior (Borg & Gall, 1983, p.280; Van Dalen, 1979, p.137). It is the element that allows for the assigning of "meaning" to the instrument (Kerlinger, 1973, p. 461). When an instrument is being developed, data are not available for conducting statistical analysis of the items in the instrument. Therefore, in this initial stage, the construct validity of the instrument was established by the judgement of three experts from the tribal colleges. This jury of experts was asked to judge whether the field-generated characteristics are valid concepts related to teaching in the tribal colleges and if the wording of the items are accurate measures of these behaviors. The responses from the jury members were correlated and inter-rater reliability of at least .7 was required for items to be judged acceptable.

After the instrument has been used in the field, it will be subjected to a factor analysis. If the instrument has construct validity, the factors created by this statistical analysis should reflect the theoretical constructs which were used for constructing the items and which were sent to the judges. Multivariate analysis such as this requires a sample size which is preferably 10 times larger than the number of items in the instrument (Roscoe, 1975, p. 184); therefore, the factor analysis to confirm the construct validity established by the testimony of the jury of experts will be conducted after the instrument has been used at several of the tribal colleges.

Content validity refers to the sampling adequacy of the content of the instrument (Kerlinger, 1973, p. 458). For this instrument, content validity was concerned with the degree to which the items are representative of effective teacher behaviors for Native American students attending tribal colleges. Content validity is determined through expert judgement because it cannot be expressed quantitatively (Gay, 1987, p. 130). The usual process of establishing content validity is to ask qualified judges to make a judgement concerning how well the items represent the content area (Gay, 1987, p. 130; Van Dalen, 1979, p. 136). Therefore, the jury selected to assess the initial constructs in the instrument was also asked to judge the degree to which all relevant areas of effective teaching behaviors in the tribal college setting had been included in the instrument. This judgement provided a measure of sampling validity.

A second form of content validity is item validity. This validity is concerned with whether the text items measure the overall, intended content area (Gay, 1987, p. 129). Although overall content validity is determined by a logical process, item validity was established by correlating the response to each item to the overall score on the test. Only items which had high Pearson correlations of at least .5 and which therefore indicated the correct discriminating power for the item were included in the final form of the instrument.

Criterion-related validity refers to comparing the instrument scores to some external

criteria which is considered to be an adequate measure of the behavior under study (Van Dalen, 1979, p. 136). Since this instrument is concerned with measuring present behavior rather than predicting future behavior, it focused on concurrent validity. This is the final phase of establishing validity and has not yet been conducted. However, two separate analyses are planned to establish the concurrent criterion-related validity of the instrument.

First, a discriminate analysis will be conducted. This statistical technique allows for studying the difference between two distinct groups (Klecka, 1980, p. 7). For field-testing purposes, the final item on the instrument will ask students to rate the individual teacher on whom they are completing the instrument; the rating will be on a 10-point number line with the extremes labelled as "Good" and "Bad." The responses for teachers classified in the extreme 20% of the line will be analyzed. The individual items will be used to determine their accuracy in correctly discriminating between those categorized as either very good or very bad teachers. To be valid, the instrument should have at least 85% accuracy in correctly classifying teachers into these two criterion groups.

Second, this process will be further checked with on-site observations. A sample of 75% of the teachers who are identified by their students' scores on the instrument as being two standard deviations from the mean will be observed. Using the checklist of factors generated from the effective teaching literature and from the student interviews, extremely "good" and extremely "bad" teachers will be observed teaching in their classrooms. For the instrument to have validity, these groups which have been identified by the test should differ significantly in the degree that they practice each behavior in the classroom.

#### Reliability

Once the validity of the instrument is completely established, it will be checked for reliability. Reliability refers to the consistency with which an instrument yields the same results (Van Dalen, 1979, p. 138). Reliability may be concerned with the stability of the instrument over time or with the internal consistency of the instrument (Borg & Gall, 1983, p. 281). This instrument is concerned with both of these issues. Therefore, stability will be measured by the test-retest method (Borg & Gall, 1983, 284; Van Dalen, 1979, pp. 138-139). A group of 40 students will be given the final form of the instrument and will be retested with the same form of the instrument one week later under the same conditions as the original test. This one-week period will be sufficient to allow for forgetting the exact wording of the items but will not be long enough to allow for other threats to the internal validity of the study to intervene. The two scores for each participant will be correlated using the Pearson correlation to calculate the coefficient of stability for the test. The internal consistency of the first set of test scores will also be checked; this coefficient of internal consistency will be determined by using Cronbach's alpha (Borg & Gall, 1983, pp. 284-285).

#### Conclusion

A teaching effectiveness scale which measures the perceptions of adult native learners about their instructors is in the final stage of development. It is based upon the learning experiences of adult Native American learners and has potential as a staff development and research assessment device. Also since many of the items in the instrument are supportive of the general adult education literature, it may be useable with other groups of adult learners.

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# Using Discriminant Analysis in Adult Education

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## Abstract

Discriminant analysis is a powerful multivariate statistical technique that has been used successfully in several recent adult education studies. This technique allows the researcher to divide the sample into meaningful groups which reflect real-life situations and to simultaneously analyze multiple variables that have the potential of explaining group placement.

## Introduction

Education is a human enterprise; consequently, it is complicated and has many variables. Since World War II, educational researchers have accepted the assumptions of positivism that a single reality exists which consists of these variables. Rationalistic designs have sought to identify, isolate, and measure these variables. Statistical measures have tended to simplify this complicated human activity even further. Techniques such as analysis of variance usually examine only one or two of these variables at a time. As access to the computer has increased, researchers have tried to include more variables in the analysis, and the use of techniques such as regression and factor analysis has increased. The ERIC system has indexed the following number of studies in education between 1983 and 1990 using each of these statistical techniques: ANOVA--1,221; factor analysis--1,354; and regression--1,770. The numbers are smaller but show a similar pattern for adult education research: ANOVA--36; factor analysis--39; regression--47.

Despite the prevalence of these statistical techniques in the general education and adult education literature, much concern exists that these procedures are not adequately addressing the research needs for the field. One response to this need for a more complete explanation from research has been the growth of naturalistic designs which rely heavily on qualitative data. Although recent American Educational Research Association conferences are beginning to reflect the movement toward naturalistic designs and triangulation designs which combine both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis techniques, AERC has supported this diversity in its program since the early 1980's and even had a symposium on this topic at its 1982 conference in Nebraska.

Why is there a movement away from the traditional analysis techniques and toward the inclusion of qualitative data in research designs? A major factor in this shift could be that social scientists investigate a situation because they already know something about it and because they want to understand it better. For example, in adult education one may want to know what discriminates those who participate in educational activities from those who do not. While traditional statistical techniques abdicate crucial data decisions to the computer, one powerful technique allows the researcher to retain this decision-making authority. Discriminant analysis requires the researcher to make meaningful decisions about the data and to impose sense upon it. Moreover, it is a multivariate procedure with the simul-

taneous consideration of several interacting variables in the complicated educational process.

Although discriminant analysis can be used to bridge the gap between traditional research statistics and the demands addressed by qualitative data, it has not been used extensively in education. Since 1983, discriminant analysis has been used in 353 studies in education that are listed in the ERIC database; this technique has only been used in 12 studies in adult education.

### **Discriminant Analysis**

Discriminant analysis is a powerful multivariate statistical procedure "for examining the difference between two or more groups of objects with respect to several variables simultaneously" (Klecka, 1980, p. 5). In the social sciences, discriminant analysis is used to distinguish between different groups of people. In order to conduct discriminant analysis at least two groups must exist which differ on several variables and these variables must be capable of being measured at the interval or ratio level. The analysis investigates the differences between these groups and a set of discriminating variables. Rather than being concerned with and using terms such as dependent and independent variables, discriminant analysis focuses upon the groups that exist and the set of discriminating variables that may explain the differences between the groups. The basic unit of analysis is the individual case, and the groups must be defined in such a way that each case can be assigned exclusively to only one group.

Thus, discriminant analysis is concerned with the grouping of people and with analyzing the interrelationship of multiple variable to determine if they can explain a person's placement in a specific group. Unlike univariate analyses which examine individual variables separately and allow them to be disassociated from the total person who is a synergistic composition of these various variables, discriminant analysis examines people on a set of variables to determine if any of them interact in a combination that can explain the person's placement in the group. The results of the discriminant analysis can be used for two purposes: (a) prediction of group membership and (b) describing the way groups differ (Huberty & Barton, 1989). To accomplish these purposes, the discriminant analysis produces three pieces of information. One is a discriminant function; this is a formula which contains the variables and their coefficients and which can be used to place people in the groups (Klecka, 1980, pp. 22-25). The second is the structure matrix which is used to name the discriminant function so that qualitative terms exist to explain the interaction that exists among the variable in distinguishing among the groups (pp. 31-34). The third is the classification table which indicates the accuracy of the discriminant function in correctly placing people in the correct group (pp. 49-51).

Discriminant analysis is useful when the researcher knows that distinct groups exist. The number of groups and the type of groups can differ widely in studies using discriminant analysis: borrowers who repay and those who default on student loans (Greene, 1989); low-track and high-track high school students (Byrne, 1990); promoted and nonpromoted kindergarten children (Mantzicopoulos et al., 1989); traditional and nontraditional college students (Perse & Rubin, 1990); active and reserve soldiers (Corkan et al., 1989); types of public school administrators (Gar-

var-Pinhas & Schmelkin, 1989); happily and unhappily married couples (Fowers & Olson, 1989); television viewers and radio listeners (Kipper, 1988); or displaced farm households and those still operating their enterprise (Rathge et al., 1987).

### Designating the Groups

The delineation of the groups is a crucial step in designing the research which will use discriminant analysis. This is also the step that allows the researcher to impose sense upon the data and to control the research to make it meaningful. In real life, practitioners know that certain groups exist; often the most relevant research question relates to what factors can account for a person's placement in that group. The attributes used to distinguish among the groups are called discriminating variables. These variables must be measured at the interval or ratio level of measurement so that means and variances can be calculated. "In general, there is no limit on the number of discriminating variables as long as the total number of cases exceeds the number of variables by more than two" (Klecka, 1980, p. 9).

Likewise, there are no limits on the number of groups that can be included in an analysis, and the chances for the correct classification of cases in the proper group are increased with large groups (Spearing & Woehlke, 1989). The number of groups should be determined by the research problem; how many groups actually exist, and what groups does the research seek to discriminate among? However, a review of various studies using discriminant analysis reveals that the most common grouping pattern is a dichotomous division. For example, Hill (1992) divided students in Montana's tribal colleges into the most successful 15% and the least successful 15%; Trutna (1992) examined successful and unsuccessful students in introductory college calculus; Erickson (1990) classified small business managers into those who did and did not participate in adult educational activities; and Moore (1990) grouped counties as "have" and "have not" for purposes of analyzing participation in adult and vocational education as an investment strategy for human capital development. While the division into two groups allows for the easiest analysis, it is not always the most powerful. When more than these two groups exist in the sample, many potential cases are omitted from the analysis. Yabui (1992) divided his sample into three groups to investigate reflective judgement and the adult learner's use of learning strategies. Based upon the characteristics of his reflective judgement scale, Yabui divided his sample into low, medium, and high groups; however, he omitted some people between each of the groups to create a buffer. "Such a buffer was considered necessary to distinctly demarcate the three discriminant groups so that the groups formed would have unique characteristics" (p. 76). In this manner, he not only created distinct groups but also included 70% of his sample in the analysis.

### Selection Criteria

Hypotheses in studies using discriminant analysis do not follow the traditional pattern. Instead of being null hypotheses which state no significant relationship between the independent and dependent variables, hypotheses in these studies use the format of stating that it is possible to discriminate between the groups using the discriminating variables. Using this formula, the specific variables and groups



from the study are simply substituted for the general terms in this formula (cf., Hill, 1992). It is also possible to use research questions instead of hypotheses with studies using discriminant analysis. Here the question merely asks if it is possible to discriminate among the groups using the discriminating variables (cf., Trutna, 1992; Yabui, 1992).

Regardless of whether hypotheses or research questions are used, the criteria for accepting the outcome of the analysis should be stated. Two criteria are appropriate for judging the acceptance of the discriminant analysis as useful. One criterion is that the discriminant function produced by the analysis is describable using the structure coefficients of the analysis; a coefficient value of .3 or greater is often used as the criterion for determining if variables will be used from the structure matrix. The other criterion is that the discriminant function correctly classify a certain percentage of the cases in the sample. If a discriminant function can be described in a meaningful way and if it is efficient in correctly classifying cases into the proper group, then it is judged as good and useful.

### **The Printout**

Although it resembles that of a regression analysis, at first glance the printout from a discriminant analysis looks very confusing. However, it can be made very understandable by focusing on certain parts. These include the within-groups correlation matrix, the canonical discriminant functions, the structure matrix, the unstandardized canonical discriminant function coefficients, and the classification results.

Since discriminant analysis is a multivariate technique, it simultaneously examines many variables. The effects of a variable can be clouded if it shares a variance with other variables. The within-group correlation matrix allows this to be examined. This matrix shows the strength of the relationship between corresponding pairs of variables for the cases within each of the groups identified for the analysis; that is, rather than being a general correlation for all of the cases in the study, it contains correlations that are based only on the cases that are included in the various groups used in the analysis. The identity of each group is preserved, and correlations for each variable are calculated based on these groups. Thus, any shared variance between the groups on variables can be identified, and for those variables with a high shared variance, one of the set of these variables can be removed from the analysis.

The canonical discriminant functions portion of the printout contains several pieces of information. Eigenvalues are listed, and large eigenvalues are associated with useful functions (Norusis, 1988, p. B-14). Chi square information is given which indicates the likelihood that the groups of the means are the same. Perhaps most importantly, the canonical correlation, which is found here, tells how useful the discriminant function produced by the analysis is in explaining the group differences; squaring the canonical correlation provides the proportion of variation in the discriminant function explained by the groups (Klecka, 1980, pp. 37-38).

One of the most important parts of the printout is the structure matrix. This matrix contains correlation coefficients that indicate how closely a variable and the

discriminant function are related. A high coefficient indicates that the information contained in the function is similar to the variable. A low coefficient shows that the overall function and the variable have very little in common. The variables with the highest correlations are used to name the discriminant function. (Klecka, 1980, pp. 31-34)

The unstandardized canonical discriminant function coefficients section contains the information for composing the discriminant function. It indicates the variables and coefficients that are to be included in each function. Each discriminant analysis produces one less function than total number of groups. The listed variables with their coefficients and signs are put together in a mathematical statement to express the function. "We compute the discriminant scores by taking the original value for a case on each variable and multiplying it by the coefficient for that variable; we then add these products along with the constant term. (The constant term is an adjustment for the means, so that the mean discriminant score will be zero over all cases.)" (Klecka, 1980, p. 24). The discriminant score produced by this procedure is used to classify each case into a group.

The classification table indicates the accuracy of the discriminant function in correctly placing the cases used in calculating the discriminant analysis in their original groups. The table displays the predicted group membership based on the discriminant score for each group and shows the accuracy of placing the group members in their original group. An overall percentage of correctly classified cases is provided. "As a direct measure of the predictive accuracy, this percentage is the most intuitive measure of discrimination. One should, however, judge the magnitude of this percentage in relation to the expected percentage of correct classifications if assignments were made randomly" (Klecka, 1980, p. 50). That is, if the analysis involved two groups, there would be a 50% likelihood that the cases could be correctly classified by random assignment; if there were three cases, there would be a 33% likelihood of correct random assignment. Thus, the accuracy of the classification results must be interpreted in relationship to that which could be expected from random assignment.

### Conclusion

Discriminant analysis is a powerful multivariate technique that has much potential for use in adult education. Unlike univariate techniques, it can allow the simultaneous analysis of many variables in the complex phenomenon of adult learning; in allowing this complexity, it more closely reflects real life than the univariate process of isolating variables for analysis. In allowing the researcher to impose sense on the data by forming groups that are known to exist and that are meaningful, it is borrowing from the qualitative approach to learning. These two strengths make discriminant analysis an appropriate and useful tool for analyzing social science data.

Although discriminant analysis has had limited use in adult education research, recent studies conducted at the Center for Adult Learning Research have integrated discriminant analysis into research designs for both descriptive and predictive purposes. Discriminant analysis has been used by Moore (1990) to investigate the economic impact of participation in educational activities, by Ericksen (1990)

to examine the influence of barriers and attitudes on participation in continuing education for small business managers, by Trutna (1992) to identify traits related to success in college calculus, by Yabui (1992) to probe the relationship between reflective judgement and learning strategies, and by Hill (1992) to explore various successful learning strategies for Native American tribal college students. Collectively, these studies demonstrate that discriminant analysis is an effective statistical tool for conducting research in the field of adult education.

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The Relationship Between the Multiple Roles  
and the Psychological Well-Being  
of the Adult Student in Higher Education

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**Abstract:** This study examines the relationship between the number and types of roles enacted by adult students in higher education and their mental health as measured by psychological well-being.

Introduction

Recent figures from the National Center for Education Statistics (Watkins, 1989, p. A27) show that 42% of the students now enrolled in colleges and universities in this country are 25 years of age or older. This large group of adult students have special characteristics which necessitate academic programming distinctive from that provided to "traditional" college students (Apps, 1981).

One such special characteristic of this adult student population is that, in general, adults do not drop other roles to become students. Almost 75% of the adult students on college campuses in the U.S. are part-time students (Watkins, 1989, p. A27). Rather than enacting the student role as a single primary role, these adults add the student role to the set of roles which they already enact.

Traditionally, the addition of a new role (such as the student role) to the role set of an already busy adult has been viewed as a negative influence on the psychological well-being of the adult (Beutell & O'Hare, 1987). However, research from the field of women's studies has shown that the addition of certain roles to the life of an already busy woman may instead have a very positive influence on her psychological well-being (Baruch & Barnett, 1987). If this research can be applied to the adult student, then the addition of the student role may actually provide the adult with positive psychological benefits.

Multiple role theory provides a platform for research concerning these positive psychological benefits which may be attributed to the addition of roles. Baruch and Barnett (1987, p. 63), for example, propose an "expansion hypothesis" to discuss these benefits. Thoits (1987, p. 13) explains this stance by saying that "privileges, resources, and rewards provided by multiple roles can be parlayed into even more privileges, resources and rewards. Resources provided in one set of role activities can be used to meet obligations in other role domains...". Baruch, Barnett and Rivers (1983, p. 175) visualize the expansion hypothesis by saying that role responsibilities "recharge" the individual, thereby increasing "the size of the energy pool" available to meet role responsibilities.

The positive impact of the role of the adult student has only been explored by a few researchers (Carter & Norris, 1984; Sands & Richardson, 1984; Smith, Norris & Jones, 1985). The construct which has been used by these studies of student populations and more extensively with other adult populations to gauge the potential positive benefits of role enactment is the bearing of roles upon an adult's psychological well-being. An adult's psychological well-being, or sense of overall happiness and



satisfaction with life, has been found to be directly related to role enactment (e.g. Campbell, Converse & Rodgers, 1976).

If this research concerning the positive psychological benefits of multiple roles is applicable to an adult student population, it may be that student development professionals are faced with the delightful prospect of working with an active and very mentally stable group of students.

This study was undertaken in order to discover if indeed positive psychological benefits accrue for a group of adult students who are enacting multiple roles. Specifically, the purpose of this study was to answer the following questions:

1. Is the multiple role identity of the adult student related to the student's psychological well-being?
2. Is the number of roles an adult student enacts related to the student's well-being?
3. Are the particular role combinations of the adult student related to the student's well-being?
4. Do such personal characteristics as self-esteem, age, gender, job type, number of children in the home, and age of youngest child in the home in combination with the student role relate to an adult student's psychological well-being?

#### Method

The population sampled was the body of 2,295 students who were 25 years of age or older at the beginning of the spring semester, 1991, and who were enrolled for at least one credit at a small regional upper division and graduate college of a large university system located in the Mid-Atlantic States. A random sample of 400 of these students were mailed survey forms; 281 students responded to the mailed invitation to participate, giving a final response rate of 70%.

The survey form contained two instruments--the Index of Well-Being (Campbell, Converse & Rodgers, 1976) and the Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965). The remainder of the form consisted of questions relating to demographics and personal characteristics--self-esteem, age, gender, job type, number of children in the home, and age of youngest child in the home.

Psychological well-being, the dependent variable of this study, is an ordinal variable (Campbell, Converse & Rodgers, 1976). Therefore, two related non-parametric inferential statistical procedures were used to test hypotheses--the Mann-Whitney Test and the Kruskal-Wallis Oneway Analysis of Variance (Norusis, 1988). Dunn's multiple comparison test (Neave & Worthington, 1988) was used to pinpoint the exact groups between which the significance calculated by the Kruskal-Wallis procedure existed.

## Results

The major role-related findings of this study can be summarized as follows. As was conjectured, students enacting three or four of the roles under consideration could be said to have had more positive psychological well-being than those students enacting one or two roles ( $H = 15.49$ ;  $p = .001$ ). Students who enacted differing role configurations had different levels of psychological well-being ( $H = 18.04$ ;  $p = .011$ ). Those students with the most positive psychological well-being were those who enacted the three roles of student, employee and spouse/partner. Further analysis demonstrated that it was the presence of the spouse/partner role which precipitated the difference in the well-being scores of these groups of students ( $U = 5206.5$ ;  $p = .000$ ).

Several of the personal characteristics under study were found to be related to psychological well-being. Female students had more positive psychological well-being than did male students ( $U = 7334$ ;  $p = .005$ ). Students who displayed strong self-esteem also displayed positive psychological well-being ( $H = 72.185$ ;  $p = .000$ ). And students reporting family incomes of larger than \$30,000 had more positive psychological well-being than the group of students who reported family incomes of \$30,000 or less ( $H = 24.381$ ;  $p = .001$ ).

## Discussion

More roles, enactment of the spouse/partner role, high self-esteem and high family income were found to positively relate to psychological well-being. When these findings were compared to the findings of previous researchers who have looked at the psychological well-being of adult students and non-students (e.g., Campbell, Converse & Rodgers, 1976; Thoits, 1986) it can be said that there is a high level of agreement. Based on this and other related research, it can be said that multiple roles, role combinations, self-esteem and family income are related to psychological well-being.

Females in this study reported higher psychological well-being scores than did the males. When this finding was compared with the body of related research (e.g. Campbell, Converse & Rodgers, 1976) a minor discrepancy arose. This current study is in agreement with all related studies discovered but that of Smith, Norris and Jones (1985). Smith, Norris and Jones found no significant differences between the psychological well-being of male and female adult graduate students. Therefore, no decisive statement can be made concerning the relationship of gender and psychological well-being; however it seems that since all studies but one are in agreement it could be said that, in general, adult female students report higher levels of psychological well-being than do their male counterparts.

## Summary and Implications

The presence of three or four roles, the presence of a spouse/partner relationship, family income and gender could be used as predicting variables when studying the psychological well-being of adult students. As was hypothesized, adult students enacting multiple roles do accrue psychological well-being

benefits. These adult students who enter college with a great deal of emotional stability need different less "treatment-oriented" services than do younger, traditional college students. Rather, these mentally healthy students require services more of an educational nature from student development professionals.

This research demonstrated the point that academic administrators and student development professionals cannot afford to create programs based solely upon the adult student's educational needs. These programs, if they are to truly assist the adult student, must take into consideration the adult student's life as a whole (Carter & Norris, 1984). Providing programs which consider the adult student as a complete human being, rather than merely as a student, can promote "conditions that reinforce positive mental health..." (Schlossberg, Lynch & Chickering, 1989, p. 112). Student development professionals should intervene and not merely react. This intervention could take the form of educational offerings tailored to the daily role-related mental health needs of adult students.

Based on the findings of this study, such interventions might take the following direction. The groups of students prone to lower psychological well-being could be targeted for workshops or seminars. Adult students with few roles or with low self-esteem, for example, could thereby learn to cope with these potentially problematic situations.

#### Conclusion

This research does indeed support the hypothesis that adult students who enact more roles will receive positive psychological benefits. Adult students with more roles may be able to cope better in an academic setting than previously imagined.

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## Community Education: A Conceptual Framework

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**Abstract:** This article contains a review of the concept of community education, a matrix for community education activities, and implications for theory and practice in adult and community education.

### Rationale

The development of community education has been primarily as a field of practice, with little attention being given to substantial conceptual development of a theoretical base. In addition, there has not been a generally accepted understanding of the scope and purpose of community education (DeLargy, 1989). This lack of theoretical base and common understanding has led to difficulties in developing a research agenda in community education, in providing substantive discussion regarding directions for the future, and on identifying the relationships between adult and community education as fields of both practice and inquiry.

While there is debate as to the meaning of community education, the concept of "community" remains vital in modern society. If adult educators retain a belief in the importance of the concept of community as a vital part of modern life, then enhancing communities through education must be an important part of the adult educator's role. A primary purpose of this paper is to alert adult educators to the opportunities and challenges of using communities, rather than classrooms, as a vehicle for improving the quality of life for individuals.

### The Concept of Community Education

A primary source of confusion in community education is the variety of terms used to describe community-related educational activities. Community education, community school, the learning community, community development, community-based adult education, and community adult education are some of the more common terms which have been used. Defining these terms will help to identify similarities and differences among the concepts and provide a basis for a more encompassing conceptualization of community education. While "community education" as a term has often been co-opted to refer to a specific school-based approach, it would appear, semantically at least, to be a good generic term which embraces the concepts implied in a variety of community and educational activities.

Defining the two basic terms in community education--community and education--provides a basis for understanding the other terms and related concepts. Brookfield (1983) notes that the concept of community often takes on almost mythical proportions which makes definition difficult. He states, however, that the most useful notion of community for adult educators is the neighborhood concept. Dean and Dowling (1987) note, however, that community can also be defined more broadly as the extent to which a group of people share a common identity. For example, professional associations or members of an ethnic group scattered over a wide geographic area but who maintain close ties could also be characterized as communities.

The nature and purpose of education is just as difficult to define as is concept of community. Higginbotham (1976) states that education can refer to either process or outcomes. The outcomes of education are often described as skills, knowledge, and attitudes. Bergevin (1967) has noted that the ultimate

purpose of adult education should be to enhance the quality of life experienced by individuals while at the same time improving society.

A fairly precise definition of community education is provided by Minzey and LaTarte (1972):

Community education is a philosophical concept which serves the entire community by providing for all of the educational needs of all of its community members. It uses the local school to serve as the catalyst for bringing community resources to bear on community problems in an effort to develop a positive sense of community, improve community living, and develop the community process toward the end of self-actualization. (p. 19)

This definition is typical in that it indicates that for many community educators the school is at the heart of community education movements. The community school is often characterized as the ideal vehicle to serve as the catalyst for community education (Decker, 1987).

The learning community is an expression used to describe the dynamics which occur in a community when community education has been successful. According to Decker (1988):

The learning community is a way of looking at public education as a total community enterprise. It provides a framework for local citizens and a community's schools, agencies, and institutions to become active partners in addressing many of the problems and quality of life concerns prevalent in the community today. (p. xi)

Community development has been defined as "a social process by which human beings can become more competent to live with and gain some control over local aspects of a frustrating and changing world" (Biddle & Biddle, 1965, p. 78) and as the fostering of democratic participation for the solution of community problems (Jones, 1965). Community-based adult education has its basis in community development and popular education (Hamilton & Cunningham, 1989). This implies education outside of formal educational institutions, often in opposition to them. These concepts--community development and community-based adult education--are not entirely congruent with the concept of community education as defined by Minzey and LaTarte (1972).

Community educators, community developers, and community-based adult educators may all feel and act as if they are engaged in very different types of activities. Yet, all of these concepts share some common properties: 1) community serves as the context for the activity, 2) the goals are to improve peoples' quality of life and enhance the community, 3) education is seen as a process as well as outcomes, and 4) education is a central means of achieving the goals of improving the quality of life and enhancing the community.

#### A Matrix for Community Education Activities

The four common properties of community education listed above provide the basis for identifying the similarities and differences among various forms of community education. These four properties give rise to three questions which can be asked of any specific example of community education: Who has control over the community process and the outcomes of the process? How many community members are involved? What issues are addressed? Each of these questions can be used to differentiate among various kinds and forms of community education.

**Control.** A continuum can be constructed on which control by members of the community (local-control) is at one end of the continuum while control of the process and outcomes of community education from outside of the community (remote-control) is at the other end. Various forms of community education can be placed on this continuum. For example: 1) community-based adult education occurring in a nonformal setting may be placed close to the local-control end of the continuum; 2) traditional, school-based community education may be placed somewhere in the middle of the continuum (indicating control from within the community which is exercised by established institutions but not necessarily by local citizens); and 3) government programs to revitalize a community may be placed at the remote-control end of the continuum.

**Participation and Issues.** Cary (1973) states that broad-based participation is central to effective community development process. This concept has also been supported by other authors, for example, Hiemstra (1972), Minzey & LaTarte (1972), and Seay (1974). However, community education rarely lives up to the mass popular involvement which is often envisioned. The reality is often that different groups of people are involved as different issues are addressed. Special interest groups in the community respond with varying degrees of intensity when issues which are important to them arise. Participation and issues are intertwined in many community settings, the breadth of one being dependent upon the other. For this reason they are considered together in constructing a second continuum. The participation/issues continuum would have, at one end, broad-based participation with many issues being addressed in the community and, at the other end, narrow participation with a few specific issues being addressed.

**Forming a matrix.** The two continuums, control and participation/issues, can be overlaid to form a matrix (see Figure 1).

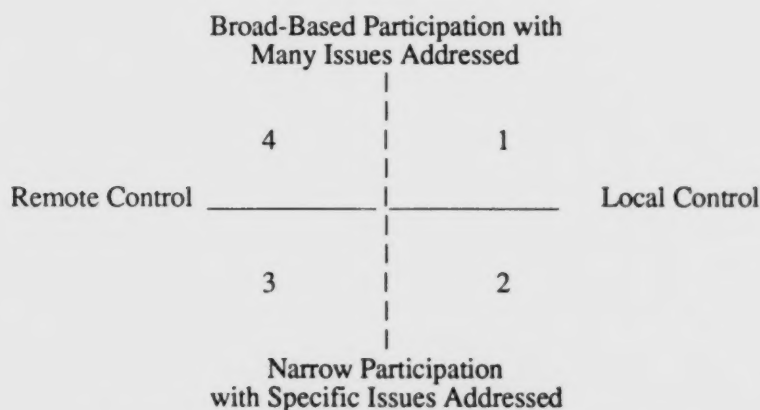


Figure 1: A Matrix for Community Education Activities

In general, four types of community education can be identified using the matrix displayed in Figure 1: 1) broad-based participation, many-issue oriented community education with local control; 2) narrow-based participation, specific-issue oriented community education with local control; 3) narrow-based participation, specific-issue oriented community education with remote-control; and

4) broad-based participation, many-issue oriented community education with remote-control.

Quadrant 1. Several examples of community development can be placed in quadrant 1. Community development as defined by Biddle and Biddle (1965) would be placed in quadrant 1 of the matrix, as local control and broad based participation are central to their concept of community development. This is also true of the concept of community development proposed by Cary (1973). Cary identifies broad-based participation, a sense of community, and a holistic concern as the three most important aspects of community development. The model of community development proposed by Dean and Dowling (1987) is also based on an assumption of local control, but with some caveats: control may begin with a community developer (remote-control) and then shift to local-control as the participants gain expertise and confidence. Such a model would shift from quadrant 3 to quadrant 2 to quadrant 1 as this process occurred. The model also allows for a shifts on the participation/issue continuum as well as either few or many issues being addressed as the process changes over time.

Quadrant 2. Community nonformal education as defined by Galbraith (1992) provides many examples of community education that could be placed in quadrant 2. Some of these examples are religious institutions, service clubs, voluntary organizations, libraries, museums, and senior citizens organizations. All of these organizations function on popular support (local-control) but may only address specific issues in the community. Whether they are close to the local-control end or the center of the control continuum will depend on how accessible the organizations are to members of the community. Organizations which allow for direct access and decision making by community members will be closer to the local-control end of the continuum. Boggs (1986) provides a case study of one such organization which rose to defend a community from a power company and grew to address more global issues in the community. This organization may have moved from quadrant 2 to quadrant 1 as its scope and influence grew.

Quadrant 3. Forms of community education where control is maintained outside of the community fall into this quadrant. One example is limited urban renewal projects with specific objectives for renovating a small area or a certain type of property. In this case, the educative function may be one of the economic developer convincing the public of the value of the project or helping the public become aquatinted with the uses of the newly renovated property (e.g., recreation classes at a newly established park).

Quadrant 4. The most ready examples of community education with remote-control and broad-based participation are massive urban renewal projects which change the face of whole communities. Another example is provided by Brookfield (1990), who identifies mass media--particularly radio, television, and the press--as playing an important educational role in communities. The reach of these media is pervasive, yet their control is seldom within the grasp of community members.

#### Implications for Adult and Community Education

The concept of community education and the matrix for community education activities have both theoretical and practical implications for adult educators. The practical concerns include questions about when and under what conditions adult educators should work with community education organizations.



Boggs (1986) has provided some guidelines for adult educators for working with citizens groups (community education occurring in quadrants 1 and 2): credibility of the leadership, priority of education as a means and an end, viability of the issues addressed, and broad-based concern of the issues. These same criteria appear to be useful also for working with remote-control community education activities occurring in quadrants 3 and 4.

A major theoretical implication for the concept of community education is its comparison to accepted definitions of adult education. There is considerable overlap between the concept of community education provided here and the definitions of adult education presented by Darkenwald and Merriam (1982) and Courtney (1989). The essential difference is that the context in which learning occurs is not specified in either adult education definition while the context is crucial to community education. Community education occurs in a "community" context, and enhancing the identity of the community is an important outcome of community education.

The relationship between adult and community education can also be illustrated by comparing Schroeder's (1970) typology of adult education with the matrix for community education activities proposed here. Clearly, one function of Schroeder's typology is to identify the ways in which decisions are made in agencies and how that process affects the adult education function. The matrix proposed here accomplishes the same purpose for community education, with the important difference that educational activities in a community context do not necessarily occur in an agency or organization. Decision making in community education is directly related to the remote versus local-control continuum. Community education occurring through an organization may look very much like citizen's action groups, if control rests with the group or community members involved and not a formal organizational power structure.

The concept and matrix for community education proposed here can be used to identify and classify examples of community education. The control and participation/issues dimensions identified through the matrix could then be used to determine crucial elements in a community as they affect the educational aspects of the process and the outcomes for members of the community.

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JUMPING THROUGH THE HOOPS:  
PROGRAM PLANNING PRACTICE IN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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**ABSTRACT:** This research looks at how the people involved in planning adult education programs in NGOs make sense of their practice and examines the strategies they use in the face of conflicting expectations and reliance on government funding.

BACKGROUND

The importance of grounding an account of planning in an investigation of everyday practice has been emphasized in recent studies of adult education program planning (Sork, 1991, Cervero and Wilson, 1992; Sloane-Seale, 1992, Dominick, 1990). These studies have stemmed from a recognition that normative models of planning cannot adequately account for the influence of contextual factors such as resource constraints, conflicting expectations or political uncertainty. This lack of applicability to practice settings has decreased the utility of the normative models. As Kowalski (1988) points out, practitioners "have become dismayed with textbook approaches which simply fail to produce effective results in the real world" (p.46).

The need for practice-based research is especially evident in the field of international development - an area where planning mistakes are legendary (outcomes have not matched expectations) and where adult education is promoted as a strategy for community and national development. In particular, nonformal adult education has been put forth as a way to achieve positive social change. With all of the faith and resources put into nonformal adult education as a strategy for development, there is still a need to understand how theory, policy, and plans are translated into "successful" practice.

International development projects are executed individually by, or through some combination of, the following types of organizations: bilateral agencies (e.g., USAID, CIDA), multilateral agencies (e.g., The World Bank), consulting firms, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). This research focuses on NGOs in Canada, which are voluntary, non-profit agencies engaged in a variety of international development activities including development education, public policy advocacy and implementing projects overseas.

The NGO sector in Canada has grown both in size and range of

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activities over the past 20 years. The more than 200 NGOs currently operating are a significant factor in Canada's relations with developing countries. Although Canadian NGOs vary greatly in terms of origin, purpose and approach, "there remains an essential self-defining core to which all development NGOs aspire: altruistic in motivation, independent in status, participatory in structure and methodology, respectful of the rights and dignity of individuals and collectives, and capable of mobilizing resources effectively" (Brodhead and Copley, 1988, p.8).

Canadian NGOs receive funding from two sources: private donations and government grants. The government grants are part of the official development assistance (ODA) budget and are channelled through the matching grant programs of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and to a lesser extent, provincial governments. In 1984-85, NGOs operating in Canada received approximately \$250 million in ODA funds. If additional funds from bilateral branches, country focus projects, and private donations are included as well, the total resource base of NGOs in 1984-85 comes to \$525 million (Brodhead and Copley, 1988).

Planners of adult education programs within the context of international development efforts are inevitably faced with several significant challenges. One of these is due to the political nature of development activities. Bordia (1984) emphasizes the importance of political commitment in the field of international development as it is "indispensable for the organization of adult education programmes because it determines whether programmes would be organized at all, since requirements of priorities, resources and linkages are all political issues. Political commitment also determines the nature of programmes" (p.23). Within the context of NGO international development activities, political will and its manifestation through the availability of funding becomes especially problematic. While NGOs strive to be autonomous, their reliance on government funds and the resulting adherence to government policies reduce their level of independence and affect their programming. Therefore, a basic assumption of this research is that planning in international development is not a neutral process; the political nature of planning must be addressed (Alexander, 1987; Forester, 1989; Cervero and Wilson, 1992).

This research looks at how the people involved in planning adult education programs in NGOs make sense of their practice. The purpose of this research is to provide an understanding of the ways in which adult education program planners interpret, interact within, and confront the organizational context and to investigate how this interplay affects the process of planning and the shape of programs offered.

#### CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Although the focus of this research is program planning, the domains of community and regional planning and public planning are



also relevant. While each is a substantive area of planning and, as such, draws on different specific theories to inform practice, the concept of planning transcends disciplinary boundaries. At a broad level of abstraction, planning can be considered as the "guidance of future action" (Forester, 1989, p.3) which points to the foundation of hope, or the absence of determinism, underlying all planning efforts.

Planning is more than just a process involving decisions and activities that generate design and outcome specifications for educational programs. It is also a way of shaping expectations. "Even the most instrumental, apparently neutral, means/ends-oriented action is politically significant, as attention is shaped to necessity and possibility, and hence to hope, cynicism, passivity, and commitment" (Forester, 1983, p.242). Attention can be shaped both by individual planners and by the collective stance of an organization through a deliberate framing, highlighting, or downplaying of the information communicated to funding agencies, donors, and Board members. Taking Forester's idea of planning as attention-shaping a step further, it can be seen as a form of "impression management" where the planner and the organization are both in a process of constructing different 'selves' depending on the expectations of the audience and the demands of the context. Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) discuss "impression management" in relation to an ethnographer's efforts to gain and maintain access to a research site. As will be shown in the section on findings below, it is also a concept that has relevance to planning practice in the field of international development.

#### METHODOLOGY

Due to the emphasis on situational and structural contexts and on the importance of understanding individual viewpoints, a qualitative style of inquiry was chosen for this research - specifically, an ethnographic approach that takes into account the cultural context.

Data collection consists of two phases. Phase I is almost completed and involves ethnographic fieldwork carried out at one NGO over a period of nine months. This NGO is a self-described Christian development organization (unaffiliated with any specific denomination) that focuses on the sectors of water, agriculture, and forestry.

Phase II involves in-depth interviewing with key informants from other NGOs across Canada in order to capture the effect of various organizational contexts on the process of planning. The two phases are overlapping and are related to each other through a progressively focused and increasingly analytical funnel structure.

Three data collection techniques are used: participant observation, interviewing (during both Phase I and Phase II), and document review. In keeping with the overall reflexive design of

ethnographic research, analysis of the data is not carried out as a distinct phase separate from data collection. Analysis has been ongoing and has fed back into decisions regarding sampling and the focus of the interviews and observation sessions.

#### FINDINGS

The fieldwork to date has brought to light some intriguing questions. Two in particular are considered here: What are planners' strategies for dealing with conflicting demands from CIDA, donors, Board members, and other staff members? How does the reliance on government funding affect planning practice?

The Christian orientation of the NGO studied during Phase I is an issue at the centre of clashing expectations held by CIDA, staff, Board members and donors. The Executive Director recognizes this and calls it a "tricky situation." Planners' strategies for negotiating through this contentious territory are a form of communicative action. They shape attention by saying different things to different audiences or by indicating agreement through silence. These tactics are illustrated below.

CIDA's only concern with the religious foundation of an NGO is with regard to their overseas activities. Government funding is not provided for proselytization. During a visit by a high-ranking CIDA official to the NGO, the Executive Director made the following comments: "We see ourselves not as a church-based organization, we are Christian-based. We're not proselytizers. The people we work with overseas are a wide cross-section of people."

Some of the staff within the NGO are fundamentalists and support the idea of evangelizing as part of their overseas activities. A staff member who had recently returned from working for the NGO in India made the following comment during a presentation given to the rest of the staff: "I wish I could say that hundreds or thousands were being converted [in India], but no..." This information is communicated with different emphasis and is subtly promoting the expectations of some of the staff.

Demands made by the Board of Directors and by the general public donors (99 percent of whom consider themselves as Christians) are similar. The Executive Director said that he feels pressure from the Board "to help poor Christians first." He also commented that there is a "misconception" in the minds of many donors that all of their projects are for poor Christians. The Executive Director said that he does not fight this misconception. Expectations are shaped once again - but this time it is as much by what is not said as by what is said.

Many donors, and to some extent the Board and the staff, consider international development as a means to the end of religious conversion. These expectations clash with CIDA restrictions on evangelizing. The organization as a whole has a strategy for dealing with this: different people within the NGO

have contact with different audiences. A staff member explains: "In this stratified corporation, we [Overseas Programs Department] don't have to deal with what comes out in public. We deal with CIDA, the government donor. For all other donors, there is a donor relations group. They get information from us and they package it as they need to....Hopefully, what comes out at the other end bears some resemblance to, let's say - is not in opposition to - what actually is happening."

More examples of planning as impression management come to light when considering the issue of reliance on government funding. It is important to note that the staff at this NGO recognize that CIDA is not just a faceless institution. I heard comments such as "CIDA isn't only rules. It's also people and personalities" on multiple occasions during interviews or observation sessions. When asked about strategies for interacting with CIDA and being consistently successful in their applications for funding, one staff member said: "There is no set strategy because you're dealing with people and what works with one person doesn't work with another person in government. It shouldn't be personalities, but in many respects, it is personalities. But when you work with personalities, you have to work with what will work..."

Strategies for interacting with CIDA are also influenced by the fact that it is an unequal relationship. A staff member explains: "It is an interesting relationship because, on the one hand, CIDA can demand of us things and we have to do it - but we really can't demand anything of them. There is no reciprocity. Now, we get money from them to do what we want to do, so, in a way, we'll bite our lips..."

How do the staff at this NGO describe the situation of relying on government funds and the strategies used to access them? One staff member said: "You see some groups that bend over backwards and do things just to get CIDA money and that really destroys what the organization originally was intended to be. Now, who is to say where [this NGO] is in that continuum. We go through the hoops just like anyone else to get money. We're quite good at it...we stroke the right people....We know what CIDA wants to see and that is what we give them. That's to say that you find out what the game is and learn how to play it." Other staff members that have direct dealings with CIDA also said: "We're very good at jumping through the hoops for CIDA" and "If they want us to do three backflips instead of two and a half, that's what we'll do."

"Jumping through the hoops" and satisfying the conflicting expectations of different audiences are time-consuming activities that are given high priority by the people involved in planning in this NGO. They are carried out deliberately and with a purpose in mind. The Executive Director elaborated on this during an informal interview: "We have to keep coming back to the fact that we are not in this other than to help the people in the Third World. Maybe that is why we give in to the donors, CIDA, the Board, the

staff and why we put up with all the crap and manipulations - because we have a common cause to help people overseas."

The research described here represents the first stage of an ongoing research project. It is an initial attempt to ground program planning theory in the experience of planners and to discover how planners view their strategies and how they manage their interactions. By basing the research within an NGO context, the findings of the completed research may also help illuminate the broader issues facing policy-makers and planners in the field of international development.

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## CRITICAL ETHNOGRAPHY AS A RESEARCH METHODOLOGY IN ADULT EDUCATION

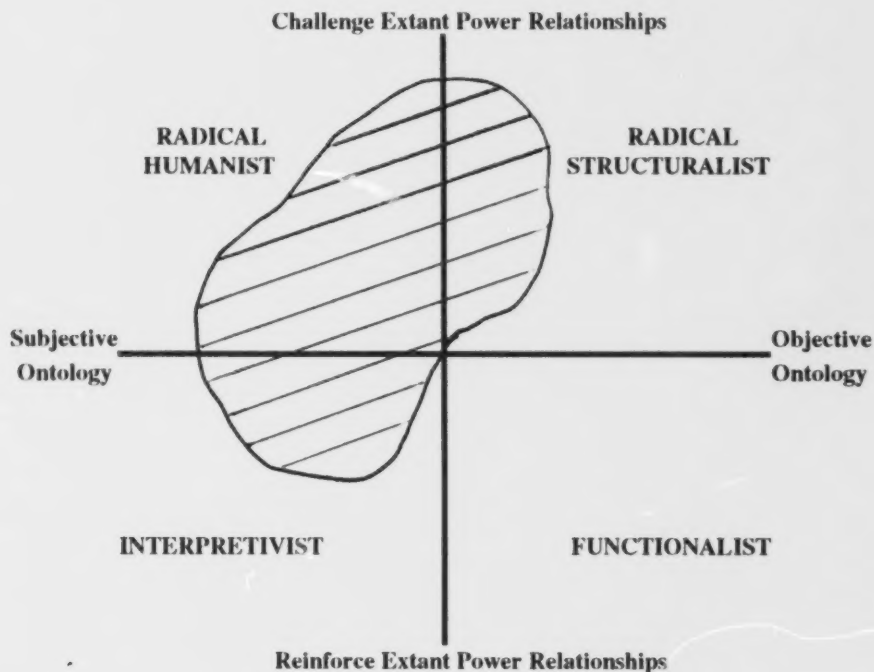
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The paper explores the benefits and controversies which arise from the use of Critical Ethnography as a research methodology in adult education.

Although little used in adult education research, Critical Ethnography has much to offer the field. In crossing paradigm boundaries between Interpretivism and Critical Theory, however, Critical Ethnography raises controversial questions around the ontological and epistemological assumptions underlying both 'new paradigm' and 'traditional' research. In this very complex debate, Burrell and Morgan's (1979) framework for clarifying the nature of social theory provides a initial "map of the territory" (Rubenson, 1982) in which to locate Critical Ethnography.

### A Framework for the Analysis of Social Theory

Burrell and Morgan have formulated four paradigms for the analysis of social theory. Boshier (1990) has modified their framework somewhat to improve its clarity (reproduced below). I have placed Critical Ethnography on this framework to give some idea of the complexity of its positioning.



**The Vertical Axis:** The vertical axis of the framework forms a continuum of ideas about the nature of society. The two quadrants on the bottom side of the axis indicate theoretical approaches which work to reinforce the existing power relationships in society, Functionalism and Interpretivism.

Both these approaches endorse what has been called the 'consensus view' of society, long the predominant view in North America. Here the social order is accepted as good and as necessary for society to be able to function. Members of society are seen as sharing common perceptions, attitudes and values, with harmonious relationships expected between groups. Individual survival depends on the stability and well-being of society. Progress can occur by smooth, incremental changes through proper channels (Selman, 1991).

The top two quadrants in the framework indicate an opposing view of society which challenges the extant power relationships. Often referred to as the 'conflict view' of society, it encompasses philosophical traditions which consider society to be "... composed of groups with fundamentally different and often incompatible interests" (Selman, 1991, p. 23). Here relations between different groups are considered a "... constant struggle, with some groups trying to maintain positions of wealth and power over those without" (Selman, 1991, p. 23). Traditional education is seen as reproducing current inequities by transmitting knowledge instrumental to the existing society and by representing schooling as apolitical, thereby denying the legitimacy of questioning its social, cultural and political effects.

**The Horizontal Axis:** In order to understand a further differentiation in the four paradigms delineated by Burrell and Morgan, the horizontal axis of their framework, which provides a continuum from subjective to objective ontology, must be examined. This axis differentiates between views of the nature of reality. The objective end presumes an objective reality which is stable over time and can be measured; the subjective end suggests that reality is experienced differently in different contexts and over time. The division made by the axis can be seen as an epistemological one. From an objective stance, knowledge consists of fundamental and universal truths. From a subjective stance, knowledge is contextual, constructed in relationship.

**Ethnography and Interpretivism:** Ethnography, as a research methodology which is concerned with human experience rather than with societal arrangements, is located within the theoretical approach of Interpretivism on the subjectivist side of the ontology continuum and in the lower quadrant of the framework. Ethnography, in particular Anthropological Ethnography, is a study of culture in which the meanings people share in a particular setting are the focus of the research. The relationship of the researched to their specific shared environment is of acute interest. Doing social science research is seen as a process which must be systematized and deliberate. Ethnographic research extends calls to be systematized and deliberate to analysis of the researcher's own cultural assumptions. The researcher must be reflexive in acknowledging and reflecting on her or his involvement in the meaning-making process of ethnographic research in order to make her/his position transparent (Tom, 1992).

Theory in Ethnography is seen to be derived from an examination of the data collected in field work as opposed to the field work being driven by theory. Research findings are empirically based, through observation and other forms of data collection, and concepts are developed from the ground up in an ongoing spiral fashion: making connections between observations, forming ideas about meaning,

and testing these ideas with what is going on in the setting. Theory can be seen as the explanation of small connections between things (which is not traditionally recognized as theory). Grand theories such as Marxism and Parsonian Theory are generally seen as too concerned with social structures and too distant from real people to be useful in Ethnography. The articulation of links between theories of the middle range, such as culture theory, and the actual phenomena of the setting may be of interest in this kind of research. The relationship between what is observed and the theoretical is consistently a dialectical one (Tom, 1992).

**The Possibility for Social Change:** Critical Ethnography, as an alternative research methodology which connects the research process with the possibility of social transformation, involves the contributions of Critical Theory, a theoretical position which can be seen as a subset of the Radical Humanist paradigm. It fits within the upper left quadrant of Burrell and Morgan's framework because it involves a subjectivist ontology which acknowledges the factor of human agency in social change. Here the inequitable power distribution basic to the organization of most societies can be transformed by people working together toward emancipation.

**Critical Theory:** Critical theorists oppose those theories of social organization in which humans are treated as things rather than as individuals and in which society is seen to move toward increasing control and conformity to expedite its efficiency of operation. Critical Theory has been a major source of understanding of the ways in which cultural assumptions (widespread unquestioned beliefs) are created to support societal norms and of how these assumptions have resulted in peoples' blindness to the meaning of their situations. Meaning is seen as socially constrained, if not socially constructed, in that the structures which privilege some people and put others at a significant disadvantage are often invisible because they are taken for granted and not considered problematic. People may thus participate in their own oppression rather than strive consistently for emancipation. Theory is seen as necessary to bring to light the actual conditions of social life by providing a standpoint for continually asking such questions as, "Who is this activity or decision benefitting?" Through such questioning, enlightenment about one's situation will occur, enabling opportunities for transformation of relationships of domination into just power arrangements.

In recent years, the use and definition of critical theory has developed dialectically with real life concerns such as the oppressions of race and gender as well as of class. What is called "critical theory" has changed from the original work of the Frankfurt School to become more a grouping of critical theories which use various understandings of societal inequities to question the status quo and societal assumptions around power.

**The Critique of Traditional Research:** Critical Theory's oppositional position extends to a critique of the ways in which research is conceptualized and carried out. The positivistic view of science is seen to be a fundamental part of the repressive myths about the neutrality of structural arrangements which support the status quo. Knowledge production in the social sciences has been thought to be the same as in the physical sciences necessitating the use of the "hypothetico-deductive method" which leads to "the discovery of objective laws and regularities" and is concerned with "measurement, reliability, prediction and replicability" (Angus, 1986, p.59). Burrell & Morgan (1979) place this view of science in the Functionalist position. In this view, questioning the organization of society is dismissed as irrational. Thus, it can be seen that research which reifies social arrangements by treating them as natural and supposedly "neutral"

cannot be ideologically neutral itself - for such research must, necessarily, implicitly endorse such arrangements and so lend support to the status quo. Positivism, therefore, is profoundly conservative and has the effect of legitimating the structural dominance of powerful groups (Angus, 1986, p. 63).

Positivism is challenged by the Interpretivist view that "human actors themselves construct the social world" and the ways they do so can be investigated "through the interpretation of and interaction with other human actors" (Angus, 1986, pp. 59-60). Ethnography, as a research methodology situated within the Interpretive paradigm, does not separate the individual from the social context, seeking instead the culturally dependent meanings by which human actors live. Ethnography has been concerned with "thick description" which graphically portrays the experience of groups of people actively and creatively making sense of their worlds (Geertz, 1973).

**From Ethnography to Critical Ethnography:** But Anthropological Ethnography in particular has traditionally been concerned with "describing and interpreting the social situation that is created by a particular group in particular time and space" (Angus, 1986, p. 62). This does not necessarily allow for an examination of the socio-historical context and how the observed "individual and group behaviour is influenced by the way in which society is organized" (Angus, 1986, p. 64). Anthropologists themselves are reassessing the methodology of Ethnography as they are reassessing the purpose of the field (Clifford & Marcus, 1986, Fox, 1991).

The sociologists, Sharp and Green, describe the necessity of combining micro and macro perspectives in research methodologies. They regard meaning construction as necessary to an understanding of micro settings but their basic claim is that researchers must also seek to understand how macro structures also materially affect the world view of acting subjects, setting limits and conditions upon individual experience in such micro situations. ... [I]nterpretivist research, therefore, in addition to positivist research, 'may be performing an ideological function in that the constraints of the structure, the oppressive face of social reality, may be masked' (Sharp & Green, 1975, p. 28; cited in Angus, 1986, p. 64).

The limitations of both positivist and interpretivist research methodologies may be addressed by making ethnography critical. The critical ethnographer's concern is with "unmasking dominant social constructions and the interests they represent, studying society with the goal of transforming it, and freeing individuals from sources of domination and repression" (Anderson, 1989, p.254). The use of Critical Theory enables the researcher to explore the issues of power and privilege and the mechanisms by which these are maintained in a specific setting. But Critical Ethnography is not just a critical reading of ethnographic data. The process of doing transformative research with a group of people who have been marginalized or oppressed must be democratic and collaborative:

The researcher's aim is to use [critical] theory in an explicit, open-ended, dialogical, and reciprocal manner with research subjects while struggling against any tendency to impose his or her theory (Roman & Apple, 1990, p. 61).



### Relevance of Critical Ethnography for Adult Education

Critical ethnography offers a research approach which can deepen our understanding and widen our vision of transformation through adult education. Although there is a movement in adult education toward the transformative, a search of sources (Anderson, 1989, Weiler, 1988) for examples of critical ethnography failed to uncover any studies identified as critical ethnographies in adult education per se. However, there probably are many studies which could be so identified.

Many of the studies listed as critical ethnographies in education generally (Anderson, p. 258), explore the ways in which schooling is a setting for social production and reproduction which meets with complex forms of resistance and accommodation. But as Welton (1987) notes, formal educational systems are far from the only sites for learning. Once we think of adult learning as also occurring nonformally and informally over our lifetimes, "adult learning can be understood as central to societal reproduction, resistance and transformation" (Welton, p. 59). Thus, participation in social movements which have alternative power arrangements and an emancipatory focus can be seen as new ways of learning the word and the world, and Critical Ethnography can provide a methodology in which such participation can be studied in order to increase the level of knowledge about cultural production, following the work of Weiler (1988). Critical Ethnography can also be used to study learning sites where adults are struggling to deal with societal inequities, with a view to research as an emancipatory practice.

**Concerns about Validity:** But, if we as researchers have an investment in emancipation, how can the research we do be considered valid by those not so committed? And how can we be sure that we are not discovering what our theoretical approach conditions us to discover? How can we tell if we are doing good research? Lather (1991) describes three interwoven issues in an attempt to reveal the implications that the quest for empowerment holds for research design ...: the need for reciprocity, the stance of dialectical theory-building versus theoretical imposition, and the question of validity in praxis-oriented research (p.56).

Through an examination of these issues, Lather emphasizes the importance of respect for the knowledge of the dispossessed. For research to be emancipatory, the researched must participate to a significant level in research design and in theory-building.

Other efforts to address the issues of research which is open about its emancipatory commitment are also helpful in answering the above questions. The Paradigm Dialogue, a collection, edited by Guba (1990), of the papers which were presented at the "Alternative Paradigms Conference" of 1989, includes a discussion about "goodness criteria" in alternative forms of research (pp. 167-201). Roman and Apple have set out questions which can be used by the researcher to test her/his research for "theoretical and political adequacy" (1990, pp. 63-4.). It is important to pursue these efforts to develop new ways of striving for research that is of good quality as well as significant and ground-breaking in order to make research an emancipatory practice as well as a credible process.

## Implications

Critical ethnography is a methodology which has a purpose - the striving toward emancipatory learning through a research process which builds on the knowledge of the researched in such a way as to work toward self-understanding and self-determination. Democratization of the research process raises many ethical questions. It requires systematic reflexivity and an openness to change on the part of the researcher as well as a commitment to social transformation by both the researcher and the researched. The concerns which arise from calling into question traditional research methodologies must be addressed so that good research can still be recognized, but the judgements of the researched regarding the usefulness of the research must also be taken into account.

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**KEY WORDS: THE DILUTION OF SOCIAL CHANGE LANGUAGE IN ADULT EDUCATION**

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**ABSTRACT: A critique of the language of liberal social change adult education and its accommodation of New Right ideology.**

#### **I. INTRODUCTION**

In North America, but increasingly more widely, the notion of 'education for social change' has been progressively diluted in response to shifts in global and national politics. The purpose of this paper is to argue that the New Right has co-opted dominant liberal models of social change education. In order to do this, I first outline the basic characteristics of liberal social change education provided by critical perspectives in the literature. Second, I provide an overview of the principles of New Right ideology and critically review key words of the language it uses. I then examine the relationship of liberal adult education models to the New Right. I conclude by discussing the similarities of the two in order to highlight the co-option of language.

#### **II. SOCIAL CHANGE EDUCATION MODELS**

In North American adult education, the liberal progressive tradition has provided the framework which guides the 'dominant' approach to social change (Sissons and Law, 1982). This framework can be examined in terms of content and process. Central to both is the relationship to language.

##### **A. CONTENT**

Social adjustment and individualism are usually embedded within liberal concepts of social change. The first of these views change in terms of the adjustments that are necessary to keep society moving along an expanding trajectory of progress. This notion is consistent with the idea of 'improvement': attempting ('after the fact' as it were) to improve what can be improved. Characterised by a more 'accommodating' philosophy, the liberal tradition prefers to tackle issues as they arise. Wren (1986, p. 109) calls this the "philosophy of the given situation: given the situation of need what can we do?". For example, given that it is government policy to have low wages and cuts to social programs, how can we help those who suffer as a result? Rather than challenge this policy, the liberal response becomes part of the process whereby "human beings learn to adapt to and cope with ongoing social, economic and technical restructuring" (Law, 1986, p. 2). The relationship between education and society has usually been cast within current relations, "seeking greater access for oppressed groups" or "educating members to perform functions within the structure of state and industry" or raising the level of public awareness over political, economic and social matters (Allman & Wallis, 1990, p. 26).

The component of individualism derives from a reliance upon 'normative' life span and human development approaches to learning theory. In the liberal position, "political power is lodged at the source of all learning - the individual. The dynamics by which that learning manifests itself are conceived of in individual terms" (Thomas, 1991, p. 315). This means that situations of social injustice are dealt with "adaptively or therapeutically by individualising the problem" (Law, 1986, p. 4) or without substantive criticism of the broader socio-political and economic context in which problems are created and experienced (Bowles and Gintis, 1976). In general, educational disadvantage is equated with explanations of human inadequacies and so the personal characteristics of the individual become the focus of change. The underlying concern is with the self improvement of individuals, the furthering of personal benefit and the realisation of social justice in terms of individual responsibility and opportunity (Keddie, 1980).

This location of change with the individual can also be seen in the rhetoric of liberal-humanist critical theory. In the more humanistic and individualistic aspects of critical theory, those who employ it tend to neglect the ideological critique and socialist vision associated with those aspects. For example, the liberal notion of 'critical awareness' is based upon an assumption that



people can change throughout adult life and that this change can be positive in the sense that "it promotes self awareness, a more accurate perception of reality, or perhaps even more power and responsibility" (Tennant, 1991, p. 195). Critics have attacked the liberal preoccupation with "individual freedom, responsibility and dignity" for not having a corresponding analysis of economic and political relations (Chene, 1983; Collins, 1990).

#### B. PROCESSES

There are three basic elements in the liberal model of social change. The first is the suppression of questions regarding relations among power, knowledge and domination. This is reflected in the rhetoric of 'learner centred' approaches to adult learning, while not acknowledging the corresponding trends towards traditional assessment and credentialing features. In general, "while the ideology of adult learning continues to reflect control by individual learners, in fact the state and business and industry play the major role in determining the ultimate shape of much adult learning" (Griffin, 1991, p. 273). A further way in which power relations are masked is the overemphasis placed on adult education's professional expertise. Critics argue that this is a form of idealism that inflates professionals' belief in their humanitarian-technical skills that the sources of many students' problems, namely sexism, racism, and capitalism, are minimised or rationalised away. It thereby diminishes the reality of how structural inequalities impact on the individual (Cunningham, 1988).

A second element associated with these models is that of funding. With the advent of conservative economic policies, the only area of adult education that still enjoys significant public funding is vocational and related academic education. This is congruent with the philosophical shift in responsibility from public sources to the individual participant and with the drastic cutbacks to education programs that have voiced a critique of the dominant ideology. The adverse impact of this is that adult education programs and services are offered more and more on a commercial basis and not according to their social value. Whether they will attract large numbers of participants and thus be financially successful is all that matters. Most available funding, whether in the public or private sector, is for services not social action. "'Doing things for your clients' is the ticket to financial security - even adult education as a service builds on a professionalised model of social change in which individuals are helped not organised" (Heaney, 1992, p. 11).

Finally, the liberal model adopts management principles. Cameron (1987, p. 176) writes that "adult educators must become skilled learning specialists, adept at precision planning so that the adults limited skills and abilities can be directly focused on crucial learning targets". Clearly evident in her ideas are the principles of 'efficiency', 'time' and 'results'. In the program planning literature the shift toward management principles is reflected by the dominance of 'marketing' strategies, justified as a more sophisticated approach to 'needs assessment'. The recent *Handbook of Marketing for Continuing Education* reflects this trend (Simerly and Associates, 1989).

### III. THE NEW RIGHT IDEOLOGY

#### A. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The vision which animates the New Right is an ideal of a social market economy or market order: the emphasis on the superior rationality of the unregulated and unfettered market. Kavanagh (1987, p. 109) suggests this "provides opportunities for individual choice, development of self reliance, and responsiveness, and it is the best way of promoting adaptability and learning". The New Right also insists that market policies promote a sort of popularist democracy of heroic tax payers (not citizens). Thus, "ending special subsidies, tax concessions, rent controls and introducing education vouchers" removes power from politicians and civil servants and restores it to the people" (Ibid, p. 110). The New Right emphasises a limited role for the state in defence of individual liberties and property rights. The welfare state is viewed as a negative force that intrudes too much into the lives of citizens, stifling initiative, inhibiting choice, and fostering drab uniformity. There is an inherent belief that the market, which is always rational, will, in the end, produce what is best for society. The market model is one in which individuals are classless, ungendered, devoid of ethnic characteristics, and without limiting cultural assumptions. Critics



have argued that what is missing in the New Right philosophy is any conception of dominant interests in the market or of the unequal power that produce unequal results. Nor is there recognition of constraints such as the absence of equal and complete information upon which people make their choices, the negative social consequences of the free market, or minorities' genuine lack of access to power and resources (Bunkle, 1992).

One of the key organising principles of the New Right is that of 'social administration'. Techniques of management supersede political issues. The tools of economic analysis are now applied to politics, governments and public institutions. For if economising is defined as a universal feature of human behaviour, then there is no area of social life which is not in principle amenable to economic analysis or able to be organised according to management and market principles. Accordingly, public servants are symbolic of the new social administrators managing their affairs like any business. Critics have pointed out that what is evident under this framework is the reconstruction of the notion of politics. It now becomes a matter not of articulating public concerns in ways which allow democratic participation in the determining of appropriate agendas, but of the 'management' of politics and the engineering of consent (Grace, 1990; Levitas, 1986).

#### **B. THE RHETORIC OF MARKET SPEAK**

Words mean different things to different people depending upon the person's value base and the context in which the words are used. Those who have power define reality. Traditionally radical words are now being captured by the New Right. This section focuses on some key words of market speak.

*Freedom* is at the core of New Right rhetoric. This proclamation of freedom is hailed in economic terms: economic freedom is equated with personal freedom. That is, the freedom to take part in the life of the market and the emancipation of the individual from social constraints. What is significant about this notion of 'freedom', from a critic's perspective, is that it is a mechanism for the avoidance of social responsibility. It is designed to suppress any conception that for many people a decent life means a constant struggle against the 'impersonal' decisions of the market. The unemployed single parents, the disabled, the elderly, ethnic minorities, and women are unlikely to be impressed by the news that their disadvantaged positions are sure signs of freedom, and by the insistence that any attempt to organise collective assistance for them will rob them of their liberty (Bunkle, 1992; Levitas, 1986).

Another key phrase, *individual responsibility*, also frequently occurs in New Right rhetoric. This term refers to the absolute responsibility of each person for their own well-being. It is based essentially on the view that individuals will seek to acquire and use resources in a way which supports and improves their self interest. Welfare of any kind or social compassion/justice is not the responsibility of government. Just as the individual has freedom of choice, she/he is also responsible for her/his own health, education, housing, employment. Where needs exist that exceed the individual's ability to cope, these are met by private charity, not public welfare (Bunkle, 1992). Linked with this notion of individual responsibility is that of *accountability*. While continuing to control and monitor, the state no longer assumes responsibility for outcomes. If social equality is not achieved who does it leave to blame? Answer: the individual!

New Right ideology deals with issues of 'equality' and 'equity' by trading them off against the economic concept of 'efficiency'. Fundamental to the concept of efficiency, is the linkage to concepts of 'inputs' and 'outputs' and 'production functions'. "More equality means less efficiency, they warn, and hence fewer goods to be distributed. A society must balance its desire for a just society, it is claimed, against the conflicting desire for affluence" (Bowles, Gordon and Weisskopf, 1990, p. 220). Critics have raised concern that this trade off provides a ready justification for economic inequality, given that reducing inequality is too costly. What emerges is a fatal conflict between equity and efficiency and between choice and equity. Efficiency is an organisational virtue while equity is a moral value. It is unlikely that both can be achieved by the same mechanism and certainly no evidence that suggests they will.

*Flexibility* is another word which now has two very different meanings when applied to work. From a New Right perspective, workers need to be more willing to accept management's

new terms with respect to wages, working conditions, and discipline as industry continues the process of restructuring technologies, plant locations and job tasks. As Perelman (1984) states, "economic security in the post industrial economy depends less on expertise and more on *flexpertise* - the ability to continually adapt individual knowledge and skill" (p. xvi). This is the very opposite to the radical idea of work 'flexibility' which was based on work organisation responsive to human needs. This clash in meaning is not only applicable to the labour market but also to education. From a critical view, what is not taken into consideration by the New Right is who benefits from this flexpertise and the changed power relations between employer and employed.

#### IV. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LIBERAL SOCIAL CHANGE EDUCATION AND THE NEW RIGHT

Has liberal social change education become a tool for manipulation by the New Right? This question can be examined in terms of the three elements explored earlier.

##### A. CONTENT

Liberal adult education's emphasis on 'adapting' and 'helping' dovetails with the New Right's need to have people cope with and 'adjust to' the restructuring process. I go even further and hold that the New Right is capitalising on this model. That is, the New Right sees some liberal social change education programs as necessary to provide a smokescreen and 'take people's minds off' the brutal effects of political and economic change. Thus, the New Right allows those social programs to continue, at a minimal level, in order to put a lid on social discontent and frustration (Torres, 1990).

Second, common to both liberal adult education and New Right ideology is the focus on the individual and the masking of power relations. The New Right focuses on the market as the forum to play out political processes and shies away from issues of power. Similarly, liberal adult education shirks away from political questions and power relations by deferring to the individual and to professional expertise rather than with acknowledging the structures of oppression. Already, the democratic goals of liberal adult education are being couched in market terms: "Social equality or even superiority is achieved through market mechanisms, aided perhaps by appropriate educational interventions and social incentives" (my emphasis, Cameron, 1987, p. 176).

##### B. PROCESSES

The primacy of funding and management principles in the current environment highlights further the relationship between liberal adult education and New Right ideology. In order to secure funds, adult education has needed to shift towards 'accountability'. That is, accountability to those interests which control funding that is based on specific outcomes which supports the status quo. Today, programs of a 'helping/coping' nature or those orientated towards training are likely to be the only ones that will secure funding on this basis.

The New Right's management principles, as applied to adult education, muffles the voice of social purpose. Adult educators operating under the current market environment are faced with the increasing demands of administrative bureaucracy: more paperwork, justification of spending, need for student records and numbers - the list goes on. The language of 'inputs', 'outputs' and 'production functions' is being introduced into the discourse of education as an analytically more robust way of thinking about education. Adult education must ask where such language and its associated mode of thinking is leading it. For if it follows the logic of the New Right position, what do students become - inputs? what does the educated citizen become - an output? what does the rich and varied experience of education become - a production function? (Grace, 1990).

It is also necessary to confront the questions: What is adult education's relationship to the market? Who is the educational consumer? These questions are never explicitly addressed in education policy, even though current policy has been shaped by New Right ideology. Yet it is quite clear from policy documents that adult education is viewed primarily in economic terms: as a means of providing trained human resources to meet the needs of the economy, and as a commodity to be chosen and consumed by individuals (Levitas, 1986; Bowles, et. al. 1990; Grace, 1990).

### C. LANGUAGE

Language and discourse create values and particular ways of thinking. They influence political behaviour and actions in certain directions. As illustrated above, the New Right is engaged in a cultural battle to unsettle and displace the dominant ideology which constructed the post-war liberal and social democratic consensus. "Any project of this kind will seek to manipulate words and concepts as an integral part of cultural and political history. Language, particularly processes of renaming and definition, is a focus of struggle" (Seidel, 1986, p. 136). Hence, ostensibly abstract disputes about the meaning of words have profound implications for public policy and for people's lives. The propaganda value of words like 'freedom', 'liberty' and 'choice' is known to those developing current social and economic policies. By focusing on key words this section will examine the relationship between liberal social change education and the rhetoric of the New Right.

The first notion is that of 'freedom'. In liberal adult education, freedom has been linked to personal freedom with the individual learner striving for freedom and self determination (Griffin, 1991). In terms of social change, mainstream adult education has focused predominantly on personal liberation. Any link to political or social liberation has been delegated to the margins. Thus the historical emphasis has been on 'individual mobility' and 'meritocracy'. Programs have looked to the success of the individual rather than of the class as the way to remedy a social problem. This emphasis on the 'personal' is congruent with the New Right's location of freedom in the individual rather than in society. In this climate, adult educators are likely to dilute further the collective notion of freedom.

Linked to the notion of freedom is that of individual responsibility and choice. Common to both liberal adult education and New Right ideology is a limited interpretation of 'freedom of choice'. Liberal adult education was founded on the assumption that increasing individuals' access to education would further their choice. Yet what was naively overlooked was the kind of choices available. Increasing one's education may mean a better position on the economic ladder; yet the choice is a limited one when we consider the location of the ladder in a capitalist and dominantly white male system. Similarly, for the New Right there is freedom of choice only for those willing to be part of the market system. Thus for both liberal adult education and the New Right, the notion of choice is an individualistic value which, by and large, operates against equity. Certainly, it does not benefit those who suffer the most - the ones social change education is allegedly aimed towards.

Another key word is that of 'equality'. The naive liberal and social democratic belief that changes in education alone could produce transformations provided the New Right with arguments which they have found very useful in their attack upon education as a public good (Grace, 1990). For liberal education, the notion of equality was reduced to an ideal achievable through education - characterised by the a concern with 'equal opportunity' (through access) rather than 'equity' (or equality of outcomes). Clinging to the goal of 'equality' and 'justice' without altering the underlying structures has been attacked by critics as naive and one that masks the current realities of power and conflict in society. As a result, these goals have failed to be concretised in any real sense, and thus remain at the level of rhetoric without any practical substance (Welch, 1985; Giroux, 1988). This very failure has been capitalised on by the New Right. Arguing that people have not been better off with state intervention in attempting to 'equalise opportunity', the New Right has focused its solution in terms of mechanisms which ensure economic efficiency. Already in adult education we are beginning to see the effects of this. As funding is linked to 'efficiency' - programs are increasingly having to be justified by 'outcomes' and criteria of efficiency rather than those of equity or moral grounds.

Finally, the New Right is attempting to displace the more radical language of 'rights of citizens' with a language of 'rights of consumers'. Rather than challenging this move, it is evident that liberal adult education has already adopted the New Right's language. 'Learners' are now being referred to as 'clients' in contemporary program planning literature. What is startling is that the language of 'business' is adopted with no further questions asked and without an



understanding that the malign influence of this rhetoric divests education of its social purposes. How much have the goals of social change education been compromised under this new system? How long will it be before the social purposes of education is only a concern by those on the margins?

## V. CONCLUSION

Liberal social change education models have complemented short and long term needs of those in power: accommodating the status quo, rather than challenging structures and power relations. Words do not stand alone but have meaning in relation to specific ideologies, principles and practices exemplified through content and processes. The co-option and use of language by the New Right is a classic example of the ideological manipulation of adult education discourse. This is reflected in two ways. First, words like as 'freedom', 'responsibility' and 'choice', which have already been stripped from its radical roots by liberal adult education, now have been co-opted by the New Right. The new and diluted meanings affixed to them provide the smokescreen behind which the use of the language itself is ideologically manipulated. Second, the language of market speak is being accepted uncritically in adult education through such terms as 'client' and 'market'. Thus, in adopting the language of the New Right, without question, adult education has already assimilated an important part of its ideological position. Clearly, mainstream adult education needs to stop and consider this co-option before its practice becomes integrated completely into the New Right's moral and social agenda.

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## Adult Literacy and Community Development: Exploring the Link

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### Abstract

Findings, based on surveys of rural literacy directors in New York State, indicate that individual-based as opposed to community-based approaches continue to serve as the driving paradigms for rural literacy programs. Ways to link literacy education to community development efforts, remain relatively unexplored.

### The Problem and Background

Since the 1970s, there has been a growing awareness in industrial countries (Velis, 1990; Limage, 1990) that illiteracy is a major problem, a perspective driven by an understanding of the social and economic costs of illiteracy (Thomas, 1989). Planners with various ideological perspectives view adult literacy as a key to economic opportunity and social equality (James, 1990).

Literacy programs in rural areas have generally been ineffective, Ferrell and Howley argue (1991). To be effective, rural programs must address local needs, satisfy the expectation of the learners, build cooperative links with other local social service agencies, and focus on the benefits of programs to the learners. In its early days, adult basic education (ABE) was generally provided by public agencies working in isolation. Though different than the past, some programs are still operating with their original assumptions (Bowes and Conti, 1990). Fingeret suggests that educators influenced by the War on Poverty have often accepted the deficit perspective of illiteracy, portraying nonreaders as dependent and embedded in a culture of poverty (1984). By offering more learner-centered curricula and methodologies than do traditional ABE programs (Ferrell and Howley, 1991), community-based literacy approaches may contribute more to individual and community change.

Yet, twenty-five million American adults still cannot read the poison label on a can of pesticide, a letter from a child's teacher, or the front page of a daily newspaper. Another 35 million read at "less than equal to the full survival needs of our society" (Kozol, 1985). Together, these two groups represent approximately one-quarter of the U.S. adult population.

Low educational levels contribute to higher unemployment rates and greater dependence upon social welfare programs, the costs of which are passed on to society in the form of higher taxes and reduced productivity (Thomas, 1989). The United Way estimates illiteracy costs U.S. businesses and taxpayers \$20 billion per year. In an analysis of problems in rural New York, Fitchen concludes that illiteracy and low job skills carry a much higher cost to communities and society today because in earlier times people could more easily make up in muscle and time what they lacked in literacy and technical skills (1991: 162).

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Rural problems have received limited attention, Fitchen argues, because urban problems seem bigger and closer (1991:1). Most Americans have only minimal knowledge of rural life. The problems of rural illiteracy are exacerbated by isolation, economic decline and lack of educational opportunities. Rural literacy programs struggle with lack of public transportation, child care facilities, local funding for programs, and volunteers to serve as tutors and program leaders.

The research questions addressed by this project are: How do the world views of Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA) program managers affect the philosophy and practice of literacy education in rural New York State? How do these managers perceive the link between rural literacy and community development in rural areas? What do they think are the main causes of rural illiteracy?

### **Methodology**

Questionnaires containing both Likert-type scales and open ended questions were mailed to 21 LVA affiliate directors who manage literacy programs in 26 rural, New York counties. Of these, 19 returned the survey (90% response rate). The survey questions examined the underlying assumptions regarding the definition of community problems, the process of social change and the link between literacy education and community development. During a follow-up on-line computer conference emerging themes identified in the survey responses were explored in greater depth. Additional conferences will complement the quantitative analysis and enrich the study.

### **Theoretical Framework**

#### **Individual-Based Approaches to Literacy**

Hayes and Snow (1989) define two generic approaches to literacy education, with different goals and methodologies. The first emphasizes the equipping of individuals with skills based on a deficit-view of illiteracy in which literacy education is a technical process of compensating for cognitive skill deficiencies among the poor, helping them adjust to the needs of the economy for productive roles in mainstream society. This approach hypothesizes a direct, causal link between lack of basic education and poverty (Alden, 1982). Illiteracy, it argues, prevents adults from achieving adequate employment and income which explains much of the observed poverty and unemployment in rural communities. Therefore literacy and basic education constitute a particularly effective anti-poverty strategy. From this perspective, literacy programs that help equip a labor force therefore contribute to community development.

This approach assumes--often inappropriately--that once people learn to read and write, they will find employment and contribute economically to their communities. Literacy programs based on this model have isolated illiteracy from its context, emphasizing individual motivation to the virtual exclusion of sociocultural factors (Bhattacharyya, 1991). The content of these programs typically focuses on functional tasks and skills needed for day-to-day personal operations, with little emphasis on learner understanding of social, political, or economic forces that constrain the learners. Emphasis is placed on reading rather than on writing and taking collective action to change their local communities.

### Community-Based Literacy

The second approach, community-based literacy, views illiteracy within its sociocultural context (Hayes and Snow, 1989). This approach, also referred to as critical literacy, starts with the individual's view of reality and relationship to society. Adherents of the critical perspective, view skill-driven literacy efforts as ineffective, because they help the poor accommodate to the structures which exploit them. The critical paradigm advocates literacy and adult basic education as a vehicle for awakening critical social consciousness among members of subordinate social classes. The awakened members then become a force for collective social change.

Literacy and poverty are viewed as the products of economic, social, linguistic, and cultural structures, rather than solely the result of individual deficiencies and failures. In the critical paradigm, participants learn to write their personal stories in conjunction with participatory action research, social analysis, the formation of community organizations, and action related to problems they themselves have identified. This community-based or critical approach to literacy education grew out of popular education in Latin American and community development in North America. Literacy educators in the U.S. have generally failed to acknowledge literacy as a social, cultural, and political phenomenon (Kazemek, 1988). However, increasingly, educators are arguing for an approach to literacy that is contextualized and community-based (Jules, 1990). It is critical theory, therefore, that underlies this research.

### Findings

#### The Respondents

Of the 19 Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA) program managers who responded to the survey, 84% were female and 80% were college educated. In age, they ranged from 31 to over 65 years, being distributed more or less equally. Sixty five percent had been on the job less than 1 1/2 years. Only one had more than five years in the position. Equal numbers described themselves as politically liberal and conservative. Most (80%) reported no exposure to illiteracy before the age of 16.

Respondents were asked to evaluate their own reasons for working in literacy education. Table 1 presents the most important motivating factors as presented by the program managers.

TABLE 1  
Reasons LVA affiliate directors work in literacy education  
(1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree)

| Motivating Factors                      | Mean | S.D. |
|-----------------------------------------|------|------|
| 1. Value helping people help themselves | 4.61 | 1.69 |
| 2. Desire to meet human needs           | 4.27 | 1.07 |
| 3. Desire to help improve society       | 4.16 | 0.92 |
| 4. Empathise with plight of illiterates | 3.94 | 0.93 |
| 5. Organizational/work opportunity      | 3.82 | 1.20 |

The least important factors mentioned included financial remuneration, a sense of religious call, and prior exposure to poverty.

### Rural Illiteracy in New York State

The LVA coordinators were asked to respond to 14 statements regarding the "causes of illiteracy in rural New York." These were drawn from and modified from a list of "causes of poverty" in another study carried out by the investigators. The highest rated items are included in Table 2.

TABLE 2  
Causes of Illiteracy in Rural New York State  
(1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree)

| Causes of Poverty                         | Mean | S.D. |
|-------------------------------------------|------|------|
| 1. Isolation                              | 4.23 | 0.66 |
| 2. People don't see the need for literacy | 3.94 | 0.93 |
| 3. Failure of the schools                 | 0.93 | 1.20 |

Items with means below 3.0 included: racism (2.16), human rights violations (2.22), corrupt government (2.2), fatalism (2.55), lack of religious values (2.21), injustice (2.61), and lack of job opportunities (2.72). Clearly, the structural or systemic issues often identified as causes of poverty were not seen as causes of illiteracy by this group.

### Literacy and Rural Poverty

When asked in the on-line computer conference how literacy contributes to community improvement, the coordinators responded:

- "By improving the quality of life of our learners . . . ."
- "By expanding economic opportunities for learners."
- "Getting people off welfare. Getting people out into the community and independent from former helpers."
- "Hoping the next generation will be more open to reading in school if their parents are learning now."
- "Literacy equals education equals . . . ability to participate in job training. Hopefully [learners will] obtain work and be a contributor [to society]."
- "Through increasing chances that learners will participate in civic activities."

When pressed for further clarification as to how literacy education contributes to community change, one conference participant suggested: "In depressed areas . . . literacy is not an assurance of employment or improved economic status." Another noted: "Perhaps we should be focusing on quality of life and not just jobs and money." However, another questioned the viability of "selling" improved quality of life to either funders or learners.

Repeatedly, participants reflected the common view that literacy affects communities through the development of individual skills. One suggested that illiterate parents affect families which ultimately impacts on communities. Another noted that 30% or more of the learners in their program come because they want to help their children. Evidence for community impact was anecdotal: "A man retired from a local sawmill has opened a checking account, doing the family finances for the first time. He's



giving his business to the local bank." Others alluded to files "full" of "success stories" due to one-on-one tutoring that led to expanded horizons.

### **Rural Literacy Programs**

The problems of isolation in rural areas was a recurring theme in the conference. One participant suggested:

I doubt if you would find much noticeable improvement in a rural setting where tutor/student teams are spread all over the county and distant from each other. Also there is so much embarrassment attached to going public that we can't have student support groups that would make self-esteem improve . . . . "

Others also underscored the problems of inclement weather and the lack of transportation to community centers. Some rural literacy are farmers and therefore tied to seasonal fluctuation in schedules in the case of crops, and daily schedules for those with livestock. "It is difficult to get the word out that we are here to help rural areas," said one. Another said: "We need funding to establish more outreach centers especially in winter." "We need information as to how to reach the farmer," concluded another. "All calls in our region are long distance--from town to town . . . [and therefore] higher cost." was another comment.

### **Implications**

Although the links between literacy education and community development have long been assumed (Bhattacharyya, 1991), these have not been well understood or effectively translated into volunteer-based literacy programs. Surveys by Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA) in New York show that neither staff nor volunteers recognize the connection between literacy programs and community development. Research on rural literacy and community development issues and training for staff and volunteers are urgently needed.

### **Conceptions of Rural Literacy Programs**

Issues of isolation (difficulty of communication, lack of transportation, the absence of local organizations, etc. are ongoing problems for rural literacy programs. LVA has practiced an individual- based approach to literacy education that is widely shared by its staff. This has not been particularly effective in reaching rural nonliterates. A community-based approach must first overcome some major structural barriers before it can successfully deal with local problems in a community development context.

### **Community Development and Literacy Education**

Although community-based literacy education is the norm in many parts of the world, the concepts must be further refined if they are to be effective in rural areas in North America. The unit of analysis has been the individual rather than the structural issues within society, i.e. the deficit approach to literacy education. If literacy education is not seen as a community-based program, can it contribute to community development or does it remain a strategy for addressing the problems of individuals? This link must be further examined, both conceptually and programmatically before literacy education can make a meaningful contribution to community development.

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## A Study of the Comprehension Skills and Strategies of ABE Students

Lori A. Forlizzi

### Abstract

This research revealed that ABE students are surprisingly good monitors of their reading comprehension. However, areas for improvement exist, especially regarding knowledge of variables and strategies that influence reading.

Researchers have investigated the reading comprehension knowledge and skills of both proficient readers, usually college students (i.e., Baker & Anderson, 1982) and developing young readers (i.e., Paris & Myers, 1981). However, little research has been conducted on the reading comprehension knowledge and skills of students enrolled in Adult Basic Education (ABE) programs. Such research is important for two reasons.

First, it can move researchers toward developing a profile of ABE students' knowledge and skills related to reading comprehension. This profile could be compared to the profile of proficient adult readers' knowledge and skills, thus providing a goal for instruction of ABE students.

Second, we cannot assume that the development of comprehension knowledge and skills in the ABE population will mirror that of young readers. Like young readers, ABE students are still developing reading skills; however, as adults, they have a wealth of experience and knowledge to bring to bear in reading situations. Information gathered from explorations of ABE students' comprehension knowledge and skills could be used to develop instructional interventions designed specifically to improve the reading comprehension skills of the ABE population.

This paper presents the results of an exploratory study of ABE students' knowledge, skills and strategies related to reading comprehension. Participants responded to a questionnaire designed to tap their knowledge about reading in general and reading comprehension strategies in particular. They then participated in a read aloud session that allowed an examination of their abilities to detect comprehension failures while reading and to use strategies to effectively repair their comprehension failure.

## Method

### Subjects

Forty-seven ABE students from two programs in central Pennsylvania participated in the study. They received a payment of eight dollars for their participation. All had previously scored between the 5th- and 10th-grade levels on the reading comprehension portion of the Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE).

### Materials

The questionnaire was modeled after those used in previous research with proficient adult and developing young readers (Forlizzi, 1988; Gambrell & Heathington, 1981; Garner & Kraus, 1981-1982; Myers & Paris, 1978). The questionnaire included three open-ended questions that measured students' general knowledge about reading and the importance of comprehension in reading. It also asked learners how likely they would be to use each of several comprehension repair strategies in two reading situations where they failed to comprehend. The situations were described and were followed by a list of strategies that might possibly be used in that situation. For each strategy, subjects indicated how likely they would be to use that strategy in that situation (0—never use to 4—almost always use).

Three passages (approximately 275 words in length) were selected and adapted to be used as target passages. The passages were written at the 5th- or 6th-grade level according to the Fry Readability Graph (Fry, 1968). The passages selected were a newspaper article on Democratic presidential candidates, a procedural text on how to give first aid, and a textbook passage on the four food groups. Each passage was prepared in a normal and two problem versions: one problem version included a sentence with scrambled word order, while the other included a sentence that directly contradicted an earlier sentence of the passage.

### Procedures

Subjects were interviewed individually by the investigator. Each interview was audiotaped. Each subject completed the reading questionnaire (with the assistance of the investigator), then read aloud three target passages (one with a scrambled sentence, one with a contradictory sentence, and a normal passage). Subjects were not told ahead of time that problems might exist in some of the passages. Across subjects, normal, contradictory, and scrambled versions of each passage were



presented an approximately equal number of times, and equally often (approximately) in each position in order.

During the read aloud sessions, the investigator observed whether subjects noted the problem sentences and observed the extent to which subjects obviously used strategies (for example, rereading an earlier paragraph of the passage) in response to the problems. After each subject had finished reading each passage, the investigator questioned the subject to determine whether he or she had noted a target problem (if it was not noted during the read aloud session) and to further explore the subject's strategy use in response to the problem.

### Scoring

Student responses to the open-ended questions on the reading questionnaire were transcribed and coded. Many students gave multiple responses to all or more of the questions, and all responses were coded. To score the second section of the questionnaire, the number students assigned to each strategy (0 to 4) was recorded. The investigator listened to audiotapes of the read aloud session on passages that contained target problems to determine whether or not students had detected target problems while reading. Strategies that subjects used at the site of each problem (i.e., rereading) were coded. Post-reading interviews on passages that included target problems were transcribed. The transcripts were examined to determine whether students had noted problems in the post-reading interviews. Strategies that subjects described using at the sites of target problems were coded according to the same categories used to code strategy use during reading.

### Results

#### Knowledge of Some Variables That Affect Reading

The majority of ABE student responses to open-ended question one, "What do you think makes someone a really good reader," fell into three categories: practice (reading often, or reading in different situations), global comprehension (understanding what is being read), and personal motivation, (liking books, reading, or learning). Twenty-five students (53%) mentioned answers that fell into the practice category; 16 (34%) mentioned answers that fell into the global comprehension category; and 14 (30%) mentioned answers that fell into the personal motivation category.

The majority of ABE student responses to open-ended question two, "If I gave you something to read right now, how would you know if you were reading it well," fell into the global understanding category (understanding the text indicates that

reading is going well). Twenty-one students (45%) mentioned answers that fell into this category. Furthermore, eight students (17%) said that they didn't know how they would know if they were reading something well.

The majority of ABE student responses to open-ended question three, "What do you think makes something difficult to read," fell into the category called reader/text interaction: word level (words in a text that are difficult to understand or pronounce make the text difficult to read). Twenty-nine students (62%) gave responses that fell into this category. Nineteen students (40%) gave responses that fell into the reader/text interaction: text level category (if texts are not interesting, present new information, or are otherwise difficult to understand, they are difficult to read). Fifteen (32%) gave responses that fell into the text category (physical characteristics of texts, like small print or poor organization, make them difficult to read).

#### Knowledge About Tendency to Use Strategies

Responses to the second part of the reading questionnaire were examined to determine whether subjects said they would use appropriate strategies in two situations where they experienced failure to comprehend. For the first situation presented, "you are reading and come to a sentence that doesn't fit with the other sentences you've just read," the investigator examined subject responses for four strategies: reread the sentence that doesn't fit; reread the sentences that came before the sentence that doesn't fit; think back to what it said before the sentence that doesn't fit; and think about something you knew before you started reading to help you figure out the sentence that doesn't fit. Sixteen of the 47 students, or 34%, responded "often use" or "almost always use" to at least three of these strategies in this reading situation. Thus, about one-third of the ABE students indicated they were likely to use appropriate strategies to deal with this reading situation.

For the second situation presented on part two of the questionnaire, "you are reading and come to a sentence that is mixed up and makes no sense," the investigator examined subject responses regarding two strategies: reread the confusing sentence, and reread the sentences that came before the confusing sentence. Sixteen of the ABE students, or 34%, responded "often" or "almost always use" to both of these strategies. Again, about one-third of the ABE students said they were likely to use appropriate strategies to deal with this reading situation.

### Detection of Target Problems and Strategy Use

Thirty-one out of the 47 students, or 66%, detected the scrambled sentence in the passages they read. Sixteen out of 46 students, or 35%, detected the contradictory sentences in the passages they read.

The investigator examined the strategies used by the 31 subjects who detected scrambled sentences and the 16 subjects who detected contradictory sentences. The strategies these subjects appeared to use while reading aloud, and the strategies they reported using in their post-reading interviews, were considered.

Not surprisingly, most detectors of scrambled sentences appeared to hesitate as they read those sentences (28 out of 31, or 90%). Twenty-three out of 31, or 74%, reread the scrambled sentences. In post-reading interviews on passages that contained scrambled sentences, 13 of the 31, or 42%, reported fixing or trying to fix the scrambled sentences.

Detectors of contradictory sentences sometimes reread those sentences (five out of 16, or 31%), or hesitated while reading them (four out of 16, or 25%). In the post-reading interviews, 15 of the 16 (94%) reported thinking back to verify that a contradiction existed (for example, remembering that the passage said it is very important to keep talking to a victim, while reading that those providing first aid should not talk to the victim). Five of the 16, or 31%, reported trying to resolve the contradiction. For example, one subject reported that he figured that someone providing first aid to an injured person should talk to the victim, but not about the seriousness of his or her injuries. Finally, seven of the 16 (44%) reported using prior knowledge in order to verify the contradiction.

### Discussion

Previous research with other populations has shown that good readers are aware of the importance of comprehension in reading (Garner & Kraus, 1981-1982), know about variables that affect reading (Myers & Paris, 1978), and are aware of strategies to help enhance their comprehension (Myers & Paris, 1978; Gambrell & Heathington, 1981). However, even good readers do not appear to accurately evaluate their comprehension: for example, in a study by Baker and Anderson (1982), college student readers detected only about one-third of inconsistencies embedded in texts they read.

The results of this exploratory study shed a generally positive light on ABE student's knowledge and abilities related to reading comprehension. It appears that many of the participants in this study know about the importance of comprehension and ways to achieve it. In response to the open-ended questionnaire items,

one-third to one-half of the respondents indicated knowledge of the importance of comprehension in reading. Subjects' responses to the second part of the questionnaire indicated that many have knowledge of good strategies that can be used in certain situations when they fail to comprehend. In reading sessions that used error detection as a measure of the ability to evaluate comprehension, the participants performed at a level comparable to college student subjects in similar studies. Furthermore, once problems were detected, many participants enacted appropriate strategies that enhanced their comprehension.

However, the study also indicates that there is room for improvement in ABE students' knowledge and skills regarding comprehension. It appears that increasing students' knowledge about reading variables and strategies is one area that should be targeted. It has not been conclusively established that individuals who know more about reading variables and strategies are necessarily better at applying that knowledge. However, it may help to inform students about variables that influence reading and about sound comprehension strategies and when they can be effectively applied. Furthermore, it appears that attempts to develop ABE students' abilities to detect when they fail to understand are warranted. Instructional strategies that enhance such knowledge and abilities should be developed.

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## KNOWLEDGE AND CURRICULUM IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Andrea Kastner

*A better understanding of the potential and limits of the role of adult education in social movements requires inquiry into social movement theory and the knowledge system revealed in social movement educational activities.*

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

If adult educators are to determine whether they have an appropriate and legitimate role in social movements a broader understanding of the nature of contemporary movements is required. The field of adult education has throughout its history and into present times maintained the claim that it can help promote social goals such as justice, equality, and democracy through its involvement in social movements. This claim takes on particular relevance in today's context of citizens' disillusionment with processes as well as decisions of traditional economic and political structures. Arising in partial response to this dissatisfaction is the growing membership in social movements such as the peace, environmental, and feminist movements.

Significant learning efforts are taking place within the many groups making up these movements as they seek to develop political, economic, and cultural alternatives. In support of these efforts members select, critique, generate, organize, and distribute knowledge on a number of topics such as technical information on the issue itself, the impact of current policies and practices, how and by whom problems are prioritized and constructed, alternative solutions, effective strategies for effecting change, and so on.

Adult education literature suggests that practitioners and academics alike are seeking to expand their role in citizen education on issues of concern to social movements through building bridges with and among the main movements. Many adult educators feel they ought to demonstrate by their professional involvement not only their social commitment, but also the usefulness of their professional expertise.

But on what basis can or should these claims and efforts be supported? The assumption that adult education can promote social democratic goals is often carried forward into activities that overlook both the nature of contemporary social movements, and the central role epistemology plays in education - including education in social movements. In the first section of this paper, I outline some aspects of social movement theory, and of current thought about epistemology which can inform the field's thinking about its role in social movements. In the second section, as an illustration, I offer some of the results of an empirical study of the knowledge system and pedagogy of three social movement groups. The implications of these findings for the field are reviewed in the last section.

### THEORIES OF CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

An essential consideration in the study of the nature of contemporary social movements is the context in which they have arisen. Offe (1985) analyzes from a structuralist viewpoint three related aspects of the context: the "broadening", deepening", and increasing "irreversibility" of forms of domination and deprivation in advanced capitalist societies. "Broadening" refers to the negative effects of political and economic modes which impinge on more and more sectors of the population. These effects are spreading also in terms of the ways and sites in which these phenomena affect the physical, personal, and social experience of members of society. "Deepening" denotes the qualitative change in the methods and effects of domination and social control. "Irreversibility" refers to the loss of the self-corrective capacity of political and economic institutions in their role of controlling profound effects of production. Social movements arise in the context of cracks in hegemony revealed by these features of post-industrial society.

In addition to the consideration of the context of social movements, it is also important to take into account their aims. While not seeking to gain state power or challenge the existence or legitimate role of central institutions such as legislative bodies or the judicial system, social movements nevertheless do have aims which imply challenges of a fundamental nature. Arato and Cohen (1984) summarize aims in this way:

Social movements [seek] ... to expand, re-define, and democratize social spaces in which collective identities, new meanings, new solidarities, and forms of democratic association can emerge .... Above all they react against the reduction of politics to administration, of political association to interest organizations intent solely on influencing state redistributive powers. (p. 269)

This view of the ultimate aims of contemporary social movements contains echoes of Gramsci's idea of the "guerra di posizione" where the intention is the gradual undermining of the existing hegemony through the creation of alternate cultural forms "autonomously anchored in the social, economic, and political institutions of proletarian life" (Adamson, 1978, p. 430). Today's social movements, it can be argued, represent a widening of Gramsci's vision of a worker-led non-violent revolution to include a greater range of actors and issues, and thus many more sites of resistance and cultural creation. These cultural forms take shape partially in the development of what Vaclav Havel and his colleagues have called "parallel structures" (e.g. Havel, 1985) such as alternate publication organizations, information networks, economic and work structures (pp. 78-9), and perhaps even in the education offered by social movements. Some of these structures exist at the present time only in embryonic forms, and they develop in unique ways according to the characteristics of the particular society in which they arise. The point is, that these structures emerge from below, out of the collective efforts of people in social movements: they "... do not grow a priori out of a theoretical vision

of systemic changes ..., but from the aims of life and the authentic needs of real people" (p. 79). Their central aim is to affect (only gradually and indirectly) not the power structure itself, but society by helping "to raise the confidence of citizens ...[and] shatter the world of 'appearances' and unmask the real nature of power" (p.82).

#### **KNOWLEDGE, THE CURRICULUM, AND PEDAGOGY IN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS**

One of the cultural forms in society which is open to contestation by social movements is the knowledge system; that is, what knowledge is considered important, how it is generated, organized, legitimated, and distributed. Typically, adult education focuses on the distribution of knowledge. Interestingly, however, the field seldom attends to the other very closely related elements of the knowledge system which so profoundly affect education. As Griffin (1983) has argued, while focusing on questions of needs, access, and provision, the field tends to overlook the key question of what is actually taught and learned. As Foucault (1980, p. 142) suggests, "The relations of power are interwoven with other kinds of relations (production, kinship, family, sexuality) for which they play at once a conditioning and a conditioned role". In this approach to the examination of the relationship between adult education and social movements, I proposing that the field also incorporate as a central focus the relations of power as they are interwoven with knowledge, and culture in education in social movements.

The concern is the importance of taking into account how power is related to knowledge in several different respects. Education in social movements analyzes existing relations of the social production and organization of knowledge in terms of their effects of enabling and discouragement of individual citizens to express their desires and cognitive interests, and in terms of the critique of specific knowledge dominant interests bring to contested issues. Fraser (1989) argues that resistance is exercised in this process of critique. [See also Smith (1990) and Code (1991)]. Social movements, in addition, demonstrate an awareness of the power/knowledge relationship in their collective efforts to create a knowledge system different from the mainstream system they critique. Hart reconnects this activity with the concern for curriculum in her assertion that the creation of knowledge of these dynamics "sets certain requirements for the content of education" (1992, p. 197).

#### **RESEARCH FINDINGS**

What is the nature of the knowledge system in social movements? How are the groups' educational activities influenced by their views about knowledge? To find out, an ethnographic study of three feminist groups located in Vancouver, British Columbia was carried out. The groups' central aims were education and research on issues related to women and the economy. Results from the analysis of two of the groups are presented here; one group carrying out a project on workplace health and safety, and one which focused on women and poverty. Data were gathered through 1500 hours of participant observation over a one-year

period. Results were derived also from an analysis of groups' documents such as advisory committee and education program planning meeting minutes, conference brochures, program evaluations, and the groups' libraries, as well as from semi-structured interviews. The findings of the study are reported here in the form of three themes.

**1. What counts as useful knowledge is a key element in the groups' knowledge system.** Technical knowledge about the issues of concern to the group is important, not surprisingly, in their efforts to understand the problem, increase awareness and effect change. The project concerned with health and safety of workers, for example, did extensive research into the physiological causes, symptoms, methods of diagnosis, and range of medical treatments of eight types of repetitive strain injuries. While they make use of university-based research results published in mainstream academic journals, they also use findings of studies sponsored by unions, and women workers' advocacy organizations. Both groups know government and relevant institution legislation and policies. There are other types of knowledge the groups also value: They also have knowledge about local and non-local organizations which have an interest in the problem, community resources useful in doing their work, such as printers, appropriate public spaces for holding educational events, and organizations which will donate the use of their audio-visual equipment. They know how to get funding to sustain their activities, how to plan programs, group process skills, a wide range of pedagogical methods for educating members and the wider public, how to use mainstream and alternate media, and the principles of a democratic workplace they attempt to apply to their own organizations. A range of strategies and potential sites for change are additional types of knowledge held by these groups. Activists in the worker health group keep up-to-date knowledge for example, of opportunities and strategies rank and file union members can use to educate their health and safety committee representatives about two vital issues: work hazards not known or not addressed by employers; and even more important, in their estimation, how they can influence the very structure and process of the committee shaping the construction of workers' health interests.

Of significance is the extent to which group members' knowledge of the real face of problems comes from direct contact with individual injured workers and poor women. This contact is maintained both by using specific pedagogical methods which incorporate participants' stories and statements of learning needs in educational events, but also through these organizations' on-going advocacy and information functions. The substance of these groups' knowledge thus reflects the selection of knowledge produced by both the dominant knowledge system, and by locally-based, grassroots structures.

In this overview of some of the kinds and sources of knowledge considered important by these social movement groups, it becomes clear why the selection of knowledge is so key in understanding their knowledge



system: what knowledge is selected is closely interwoven with content of educational programs, and with the choice of pedagogical approaches.

**2. Knowledge from individuals' everyday experience is linked together with knowledge of larger global economic and political structures.** This characteristic of the knowledge system has two aspects. First, experience is considered a legitimate ground of knowledge by these groups. In their pedagogy, without exception, educational events started with the structured opportunity for participants to relate their own experience of the issue or problem addressed. For example, in a weekend-long workshop organized by the women-and-poverty group attended by both women who were poor and women currently financially secure, in the first hour each participant told of their own personal experiences of being poor. Participants who had never been poor described their sense of vulnerability and fear of poverty, and the sources of those feelings. Through the course of the workshop, reference was made to these stories. It is important to recognize that members of the groups studied also demonstrate an awareness of the limits of the sole use of experience as a basis of knowledge. They recognize that experience too, is partially socially constructed, and not always critically examined.

The second dimension of this theme is the link groups make between legitimate knowledge from individual experience and that drawn from other sources. In the workshop described above, the movement group members also had the goal of expanding participants' knowledge of the causes of poverty beyond those revealed in personal stories. In aid of this they introduced the concepts of "impoverishment" as a replacement for "poverty", and the idea of "justice, not charity" as an approach to thinking about causes and solutions beyond individual action. The latter was seen as particularly relevant in this event since the financially secure women had all, as active members of a local church, been involved in individual-oriented charity like Christmas hampers. The use of these concepts helped stimulate the generation of knowledge in a process of analysis of the global, structural causes of poverty. This analysis drew on technical, externally-produced, "objective" knowledge held by the facilitators and some participants; for example, national statistics concerning the income of female single parents compared to that of fathers living apart from their families; and practices of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank and their effects on women in Canada and in less developed countries.

**3. The knowledge system is inextricably linked to group goals of action to promote social change.** The example of the use of the "justice, not charity" concept points directly to the groups' goals of developing and distributing knowledge that leads to action. At all educational events analyzed in this research, education for action was clearly the ultimate goal. The actions planned were of a collective nature both in their implementation and in their intention to benefit everyone

affected by the problem, not only participants in the educational event. Participants identified and explored potential sites where active intervention could be initiated; they learned strategies appropriate for action in those locations, and reviewed possible methods used by dominant structures to discourage any challenge. Categories of knowledge, and boundaries between them are not rigidly defined: technical knowledge, experience, skills, and knowledge of how hegemonic power shapes everyday experience are combined in education for both resisting and creating change in cultural formations.

### **IMPLICATIONS**

Adult educators operating with views of social movements' context and aims different from those of the movement's members, or with no appreciation of the possibility of a range of social and economic analyses, are in danger of misunderstanding the content and aims of educational activities of these groups. Consequently, there is a risk of misjudging the potential for the success of their relationship with them. Neglect of a close and critical examination of the content of curriculum in adult community education programs presents the danger of the unwitting manipulation and disempowerment of the people the field intended to serve. Adult educators would be aided in determining the boundaries of their role in social movements, and consequently in the development of a critical curriculum theory of the field if they ask: What social theory, what relations of power and knowledge are presupposed and practised by adult education academics and practitioners?

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**Wisdom, Adult Education and Women:  
Confucius and Aristotle Revisited**

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**Abstract:** Both Aristotle and Confucius emphasized that the purpose of education is to develop and advance wisdom. One reason for their emphasis on wisdom in education comes from their belief that only through wisdom can humans combine truth and goodness in their endeavors. And this search for truth and goodness is fundamentally related to one's realization of a good human and the pursuit of the good life. Since wisdom is not naturally given to persons but is generated through life experiences in our life-worlds, both philosophers relate the concept and exercise of wisdom to adults who, through experience, have strongly developed judgement and management, and whose reason d'etre is to be self-sufficient, moral and political beings. However, they shared similar negative, noninclusive and deficient views on women when measured against the nature and character of "men". Using Confucian and Aristotelian analyses, I investigate, identify, and elaborate the nature and relationship between wisdom and adult education. I also explore the impact of their analyses on women.

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What is the purpose of learning? Among the great number of answers for this question, I will say, it is to make sense of, and understand, life. What is the point of understanding life? My answer will be to have a better life. So I conclude that the end of education is to achieve a good life. The next set of questions will be: What is a "good life"? and How can we achieve it? Based on the different answers to these questions, different functions or roles of education can be identified.

Adult education, like any human endeavor, is undeniably a pursuit of the good life, however conceived. Whatever else it is, adult education certainly involves the actualization of the goodness of life, that is to say, the realization of a more self-sufficient, historical and moral-political being. This realization requires wisdom which can only be achieved through continuous inquiry and reflections on relational experiences. In spite of its popularity, technical, and efficiency-oriented training does not foster wisdom because it lacks these reflective, relational, and critical attributes. Therefore, the praxis of adult education should embody wisdom-promoting experiences.

Confucius and Aristotle put a great emphasis on wisdom in human life. Using their writings, I investigate, identify, and elaborate the nature and relationship between wisdom and adult education, and explore the impact of their analyses on women. My investigation involves relating wisdom to concepts such as human nature, human development, culture, good life, and good society.

I will be particularly critical of their patriarchal and class oriented perspectives and how they have been used to perpetuate the subjugation of women.

Let me start with Confucius first since he predates Aristotle. In his book, The Doctrine of the Mean, Confucius attempts to illustrate his metaphysical understanding.

What heaven [Nature] imparts to man is called human nature. To follow our nature is called the Way [Tao]. Cultivating the Way is called education. The Way cannot be separated from us for a moment.... Therefore, the superior man is cautious over what he does not see, and apprehensive over what does not hear. There is nothing more visible than what is hidden and nothing is more manifest than what is subtle. Therefore the superior man is watchful over himself when he is alone. Before the feelings of pleasure, anger, sorrow, and joy are aroused it is called equilibrium (centrality, mean). When these feelings are aroused and each and all attain due measure and degree, it is called harmony. Equilibrium is the great foundation of the world, and harmony its universal path. When equilibrium and harmony are realized to the highest degree, heaven and earth will attain their proper order and all things will flourish (Chan, p.98, 1973).

Here, Confucius claims that wisdom involves both understanding the character of the divine and unchanging human nature, and following that nature. This wisdom is developed through education and is indispensable to human development -- cultivating and achieving the human way. And human development is a precondition for universal order and harmony.

In the book, The Great Learning, Confucius elaborates 1) the purpose of adult education ("the great learning"); 2) the importance of knowing the distinction between the roots and the branches; and 3) the significance of self-cultivation for the foundation of social order.

What the Great Learning [adult education] teaches, is - to illustrate illustrious virtue; to renovate the people; and to rest in the highest excellence. ... Things have their root and their branches. Affairs have their end and their beginning. To know what is first and what is last will lead one near the Way. The ancients who wished to illustrate illustrious virtue throughout the kingdom, first ordered well their own States. Wishing to order well their States, they first regulated their families. Wishing to regulate their families, they first cultivated their persons. Wishing to cultivate their persons, they first rectified their hearts. Wishing to rectify their hearts, they first sought to be sincere in their thoughts. Wishing to be sincere in their thoughts, they first extended to the utmost their knowledge. Such extension of knowledge lay in the investigation of things. ... From the son of Heaven down to the mass of the people, all must consider the cultivation of the person the roots of everything besides. It cannot be, when the root is neglected, that what should spring from it will be well ordered (Legge, p.356-359, 1971).



According to Confucius, success, power, fame, and wealth are not the roots of human life but the branches or the results of some specific action. The person who searches for and strives toward realization of the roots of humanity and life is the person who aspires to achieve wisdom and moral character. Education facilitates wisdom; wisdom is the basis for the development of good persons; and good persons are the building blocks of a harmonized, and well-ordered society.

Confucius lived through the times of moral, social, and political chaos. His troubling time reflected his lifelong project -- that was: to reestablish, correct, and reform the moral, social, and political ills that were prohibitive to the development of morally well ordered and harmonized good society. He locates the roots of chaos of his society to moral collapse of his culture. According to Confucius, moral nature and character is the root of human life and the basis for the development of well ordered and harmonized society. Confucius is especially critical of leaders' moral character. He believes that leaders are leaders because of their presumed moral excellence. He illustrates throughout the book, Analects, that when the kings were virtuous and politically excellent, the people were loyal to the kings and happy in that society. Actually, he implies that the moral collapse of kings, ministers, and officers of government was responsible for social and political chaos.

The society in which Confucius lived was male-dominated feudalistic society. He presumes that the justification for this domination is the dominators' moral superiority. Furthermore, he believes that education nourishes and fortifies morality which in turn dictates culture and social structure. Accordingly, men, because of their moral superiority, require more education than women. Confucius rationalizes this exclusive educational privilege as follows: "The relation between superiors and inferiors, is like that between wind and grass. The grass must bend, when the wind blows across it" (Legge, p. 259).

No further explanation is apparently warranted for this flagrant, taken-for-granted, cultural, social and political determinism. But Confucius' sexism gets even more profound. In the book, Analects he continues: "Women and servants are most difficult to deal with. If you are familiar with them, they cease to be humble. If you keep a distance from them, they resent it" (Chan, p.47). He describes women and servants as if he was describing cats or dogs. Obviously, women and servants are inferior to him. But in what sense? Always and forever? Confucius says in the Narratives of the School:

Man is the representative of Heaven, and is supreme over all things. Women yields obedience to the instructions of man, and helps to carry out his principles. On this account she can determine nothing of herself, and is subject to the rule of the three obediences. When young, she must obey her father and elder brother; when married, she must obey her husband; when her husband is dead, she must obey her son. ... Woman's business is simply the preparation and supplying of drink and food. Beyond the threshold of her apartments she should not be known for evil or for good. She may not cross the

boundaries of the State to attend a funeral. She may take no step on her own motion, and may come to no conclusion on her own deliberation. ... A wife may be divorced for six reasons: disobedience to her husband's parents; not giving a birth to a son; dissolute conduct; jealousy; talkativeness; and thieving (Legge, p.104).

Among the servants, female servants should obey male servants. Women should not have education to develop moral sense or to achieve wisdom. What women should learn is how to obey well without complain. Therefore, the concepts of wisdom, good person, and good life would very differently applied toward women. Whereas the whole range of human endeavors and pursuits are open to men, the role and vision of women are circumscribed -- that is to say, as an ancillary support to their husbands and children. For instance, Confucius excludes women from inquiry into concepts and areas such as justice, freedom, enlightenment and emancipation.

Aristotle begins his Nichomachean Ethics with "every art and every inquiry, and similarly every action and choice, is thought to aim at some good" (Barnes, p.1729, 1991). So, the good is the object of all human striving. The good is identified with happiness. Then, what is happiness? In answering this question, Aristotle turns to the notion or concept of function or activity of human because he thinks that human happiness rests in the actualization of human function or activity. We actualize human function or activity only when we actively direct our life rationally, that is to say, in accordance with the highest virtues or excellences. In other words, Aristotle believes that the purpose or the end of life is to actualize happiness which is achieved only through the practice of reason.

In actualizing the good life or happiness, two conditions need to be recognized. The first is concerned with our understanding, intuiting, judging the right and good principles. The other is that we should develop the character or virtues to act and practice what we know and understand to be the best for our life. That is to say, a unity between knowing and acting is required for a good life. Therefore, two excellences should be developed together: the excellence of intellect and the excellence of character or moral virtue. The excellence of intellect is related to the former and the excellence of character is to the latter condition. According to Aristotle, moral virtue or excellence of character is neither emotions nor some natural faculty, but a disciplined and habituated moral character which is formed through repetitive action in terms of what is right and good. In fact, this moral virtue transcends the animal part of human life. It actualizes human function in the sense of putting non-rational emotions under reasons.

The development of intellectual and moral virtues is concerned with good judgement and the will to choose the golden mean in our everyday domains of action and feeling. The golden mean is a proper, just, and right medium between excess and defect. This "mean" is determined by the rational principle or reason that a "man" of practical wisdom would use. Recognizing, choosing, and following the golden mean in our everyday life situations promote the development of practical reason and wisdom. Aristotle attempts

to define practical wisdom as "a truthful state embodying reason, concerned with action about what is good and bad for man" (Edel, 1984). That is to say, practical wisdom is concerned with how to secure the ends of human life.

In processing practical reason and exercising practical wisdom, prudence and deliberation are crucial concepts. Prudence and deliberation are concerned with the relations of dealing with means and ends of action. Whereas the end is related to a value, the mean is related to realization of that value. Deliberation and prudence concern developing good actions which involve making good judgements, calculation, and reasoning of proper and right means in order to achieve good ends. According to Aristotle, practical wisdom refers to the unity between values and goals and involves formulating hierarchy values and goals of our action for the general good life in the society. In terms of hierarchy of values and goals, the two supreme values are happiness and the goodness of state, both of which rest on virtues. They characterize self-sufficient values or ends, aiming not at something else but searching for its own sake.

Aristotle, in his book, Politics, defines the state as the highest form of community. It aims at the highest **common good**. According to Aristotle, the state is purposive natural development coming from human needs to be more self-sufficient and to secure good life. Therefore, state or political community is prior to the family and to an individual since "the whole is of necessity prior to the part," and since the individual, when isolated, is not self-sufficing. Aristotle conceives the state as an organic whole which is composed of many different parts with dissimilar functions but with one common end. Mishra (1957) further clarifies Aristotle's concept of the state: "The state is a partnership, every part of which contributes its own peculiar share to the social whole without losing its own individuality" (p.279). There must be a proper balance between universality and individuality. Therefore, the mean is justice and the extreme is injustice. Practical wisdom demands that diversity is as much necessary for unity as unity for diversity. So, we can conclude as Mishra did, that Aristotle's ideal state is the highest ethical association of person which exists for and promote the "good life" of its citizens. The ideal state, based on moral principles of justice, friendship, agreement, and equality, exists for the highest possible moral life of each person.

But who will define and decide the different functions of the members of the society? In Aristotle's male-dominated and elitistic Greek culture and society, whereas citizens had political power, slaves and women did not have such power. Aristotle holds that "on grounds both of reason and of fact, some should rule and others be ruled is a thing not only necessary, but expedient; from the hour of their birth, some are marked out for subjection, others for rule" (Barnes, p.1990). Let us see his justification of this determinism.

A living creature consists in the first place of soul and body, and of these two, the one is by nature the ruler and the other the subject. ... The male is by nature superior, and the female inferior; and one the rules, and the other is ruled;

this principle, of necessity, extends to all mankind (Barnes, p.1990).

He obviously associated women primarily with body which is inferior to soul of which is associated with man. In short, women are inferior to man because men are thought to be more rational than women. This superiority of men by virtue of reason gives man the natural right to rule and dominate women, according to Aristotle.

For both of Confucius and Aristotle, true education, when it promotes or directs the roots of human life -- development of wisdom and moral consciousness -- completes the process of cultivating human character. And this moral nature and character are fundamentally related to the development of good life and good society. However, their definition and determination of good life and good society, which were socially constructed by their male-dominated and elitistic society, brought about social and political injustice toward women. In fact, they have been used as an ideology for perpetuating unjust hierarchical male dominated social structure. Even though both Confucius and Aristotle believed that wisdom can only be achieved through continuous questioning and reflections, they did not question the grounds of their male-dominated reality. That is to say, they were imprisoned by their time and culture because they stopped questioning. There are inseparable relationships among true persons, true education, democratic and moral culture and society, and finally good life for all, regardless of gender, class, and race. Based on the standpoint that every person regardless of gender, class, and race has the right to carry out his/her human character as historical not just adaptive, moral and political beings, Confucius and Aristotle's deterministic hierarchical views on women must be criticized for the sake of the realization of social and political justice.

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## **A Research Agenda for Technologically Mediated Instructional Strategies in Adult Education**

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**A research agenda has resulted from a developmental process for studying the effectiveness of technologically mediated instructional strategies.**

### Introduction

Daggett and Branigan's (1987) comment, "Present models of teaching do not fit the increasing democratization and non-hierarchical characteristics of an information society . . . " (p. 14) reflects the paradigm shift of educational reform. The resulting redefinition of the role of all instructors as learning consultants, facilitators, and advisors has occurred at a time of conflicting forces. Educational efforts are affected by competitive programs, diminished instructional time, a need for flexibility in scheduling and location of instruction, and the pressure to educate more students for less money (Geber, 1990; Lusteran, 1985). In an attempt to meet these challenges, many organizations have begun to invest heavily in TMIS. The sophisticated technology is seen as a way of providing student-directed learning systems and training on demand in the workplace (Knirk & Christinaz, 1990; Geber; 1990).

### Need for the Study

TMIS selection has been recognized as an integral part of the total instructional development process (Anderson, 1983; Gagne, Briggs & Wager, 1988; Briggs & Wager, 1981; Boucher, Gottlieb & Marganlander, 1973; and Sleeman, Cobun & Rockwell, 1979). However, because the selection of effective TMIS is based on a combination of interrelated factors, the process is difficult and complex (Anderson, 1983).

Several researchers have recognized the dynamic context of the learning environment and have identified a need to study how TMIS fits into that overall instructional context (Brody, 1984; Chao, Legree, Gillis & Sanders, 1990). Although research studies have investigated the relationship among selected TMIS and contingency factors, there is a need to piece the research findings together and study the effectiveness of the array of TMIS in a holistic manner (Brody, 1984; Chao, Legree, Gillis & Sanders, 1990). The results of meta-research can produce a model which could be used by educators and trainers to determine if TMIS is effec-

tive in relation to an array of factors. In addition, Hannafin (1985) identified the need for an adequate research agenda to provide other researchers direction into the instructional dimensions of various TMIS.

### Research Purpose

The purpose of the research is to (1) provide a developmental process for investigating the effectiveness of TMIS with the goal of developing a contingency model to serve as a decision-making framework for educators and trainers; (2) propose a research agenda identifying relevant contingency variables for studying the effectiveness of TMISs.

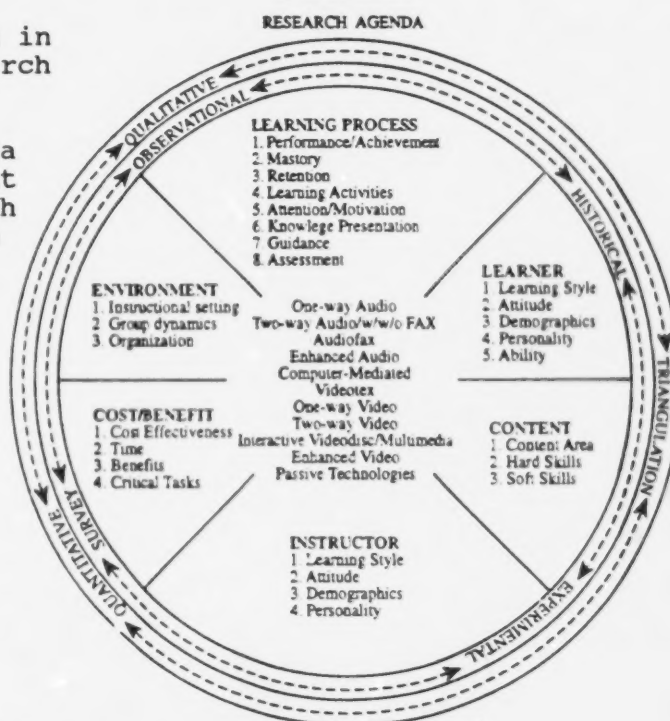
### Research Methods

Since 1987, a team of researchers has systematically conducted a three-phased study. During Phase I, a model TMIS laboratory was established, a national survey of educators and trainers was conducted; a literature review was conducted; and research questions and variables were culled from the literature. During Phase II, survey, experimental, qualitative, and observational studies were conducted to investigate contingency relationships. Phase III continues toward the development of the contingency model.

### Research Agenda

As illustrated in Figure 1, the research agenda depicts an organized research strategy. The agenda illustrates relevant factors and research methods culled from over 100 research studies to date. Six major factors were identified: environment, learner, instructor, learning process, content, and cost/benefit. In addition, several variables were identified within each factor. To discern the effectiveness

**Figure 1**



of a TMIS within a particular environment, the media is examined in relation to each of the relevant variables, holistically as well as individually.

Environment. The internal and external environmental conditions which may influence the effectiveness of various TMIS may be studied; for example, instructional setting; group dynamics; communication patterns; institutional goals; and organizational climate.

Learner. The researcher is interested primarily in how the learner's performance and/or achievement level are affected by the delivery system. Other relevant variables might include cognitive style; attitude; personality profile; or various demographic variables.

Instructor. The research might investigate instructor attitude toward TMIS; cognitive style and/or personality profile of the instructor; and various demographic variables.

Learning process. Research into the variables influencing the learning process might include the effect of TMIS on student performance; level of mastery attained through the use of a TMIS; accommodation of the learning process at the various levels of Bloom's taxonomy; short and long-term retention rates of learners; learner assessment; motivational factors; knowledge presentation; and learning activities.

Content. The effect of TMIS on learner performance, given the content and/or desired outcomes, may be studied by investigating the effectiveness of a particular TMIS on teaching "hard" or "soft" content. "Hard" content is that which can be measured by competency-based, objective evaluations, while "soft" content involves a higher-level assimilation of knowledge and a synthesis of information and is therefore more difficult to measure.

Cost/Benefit. Because implementing TMIS often involves an initially expensive investment, cost/benefit assessments consider the benefits and drawbacks of TMIS within a particular context. Researchers may examine critical tasks involved in using the TMIS to develop criteria for judging the effectiveness of the TMIS.

The outer circles of Figure 1 portray how studies related to this research agenda lend themselves to various forms of quantitative, qualitative and multiple method approaches, based on the purpose of the study.

#### Direction for Further Research

A variety of approaches have been used by researchers to study the effectiveness of TMIS. Cognitive researchers, for example, concentrate on the intellectual processes tapped by TMIS and study how and why TMIS affects the learner and the learning process.

Some researchers describe how TMIS is used by individuals or groups of learners. Finally, experimental research compares learners using TMIS with a variety of control groups (U. S. Congress, Office of Technology Assessment, 1988).

When TMIS effectiveness studies are reviewed, a number of criticisms commonly surface. A key criticism is that researchers ask the wrong question. "Which TMIS is the best?", for example, is the "wrong" question because the TMIS does not influence instructional effectiveness (Clark, 1983a, 1983b); rather, a collection of variables influence effectiveness, as illustrated in the research agenda in Figure 1.

TMIS comparison studies have been criticized on several grounds. In particular, those using experimental or quasi-experimental methods have been questioned. In some comparison studies, for example, TMIS treatments were supplementary while control treatments were not, therefore, TMIS groups received more instructional time. Additional flaws reported included inadequate controls; non-random assignment; incommensurable content; disproportionate attrition from experimental groups; differences in relevant teacher attributes (U.S. Congress, Office of Technology Assessment, 1988); and the mitigating effect of curricular reform accompanying the use of TMIS (Clark, 1983, cited in Hasselbring, Sherwood, & Bransford, 1986; Reeves, 1986). One study reported 26 of 51 research reports unusable because of methodology questions (Becker, 1987).

Although the importance of carefully controlled experimental methods is recognized, researchers should consider using other methods for comparative studies, i.e., structured observations, controlled correlation and multi-variate techniques. Naturalistic/case study methodologies and meta analyses can also provide insight into contingency relationships.

#### Conclusions and Recommendations

The following **conclusions** are made:

1. Six major factors for the TMIS research agenda are identified: environment, learner, instructor, content, learning process, cost/benefit.
2. Salient variables are identified for each factor. Twenty-seven variables are identified thus far.
3. The research agenda provides researchers with a conceptual map for conducting research to study the effectiveness of TMIS in educational and business environments.



4. A variety of research approaches are employed for TMIS effectiveness studies; however, some effectiveness studies are validly criticized.

The following recommendations are made:

1. Carefully designed and executed research should be conducted to define contingency relationships among variables in the research agenda.
2. Research questions for adult education should be generated based upon research agenda variables.
3. A contingency model should be developed based on research completed within adult education.
4. The research agenda should be validated, with the purpose of validating existing variables/factors, their placement within the agenda, and identifying additional variables/factors relevant to adult education.
5. Since technology will exert an increasing effect on their work, adult educators should pursue TMIS research, considering multidisciplinary collaboration.

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STORY-TELLERS: THE IMAGE OF THE TWO-YEAR COLLEGE  
IN AMERICAN FICTION AND IN WOMEN'S JOURNALS

Nancy LaPaglia

**Abstract:** American fiction portrays the two-year college student as a re-entry woman who is a passive loser. Journals written by re-entry women and women faculty reveal a different image.

Two-year college people are maligned or ignored by American fiction, by most academic researchers, and by our culture in general. Two-year colleges are rarely portrayed in fiction, even when we include the popular media of television, film and murder mysteries. When they or their inhabitants do surface, the view is usually pejorative.

The fictional stereotype of a student is a white, working-class woman of "non-traditional" age. She is a re-entry student, and attends part-time. Passive and unenlightened, life just sort of happens to her. Her usual teacher is a white male in the English Department who rarely thinks his job is important. He may expend much of his energy on sexual liaisons with his students. Typically, the author's intent is ridicule, and "community college" and "junior college" have become shorthand for "loser" and "not worth taking seriously."

When the re-entry woman is given the chance to tell her own story, it is quite different. In twenty-three journals written for my study at five community colleges in Illinois, Oregon and New York, women disclose efforts to take control of their own lives against great odds, they describe the joy of learning, and they indicate an awareness of their marginality.

Fourteen women faculty at the same colleges also wrote journals for me, and they concur with the students. They write of problems encountered and battles fought, as do the re-entry women, but the over-riding import of their journals is a sense of mission and nurturing professionalism in a "calling" they value.

My purpose in the study was to address the discrepancy in the visibility and in the worth conferred upon the two-year college and its inhabitants by these two kinds

of story-tellers: 1)the writers of American fiction, including popular fiction and the mass media, and 2)thirty-seven students and faculty who wrote about their experiences in open-ended journal format. I.e., I investigated a stereotype, and then found actual people who were living in the stereotype's situation to see what they had to say.

Put yet another way, I analyzed the stories of 1)the outsiders, who are professional fiction writers, and 2)the insiders, who are amateur autobiographers. The latter are part of over five million people this year alone, or almost half of all undergraduates in the U.S. and nearly half of all college faculty. The two-year college system is the fastest growing segment of higher education today. For this reason alone, what "insiders" have to say about their experiences is worth studying. I also found their stories emotionally moving, full of rich metaphor and insightful critiques. I cannot say the same about much of the fiction.

When all these "documents" were approached without an established theoretical framework in mind, what common themes emerged? I summarize my findings below, in four categories: Students in fiction, students in their journals, faculty in fiction, and faculty in their journals. A fifth theme, involving the act of writing journals, is not specifically related to two-year colleges, and will be summarized separately.

Students in fiction: 1)The typical community college student character is a white, working-class re-entry woman who is attending part time.

2)Works appearing before the 1970's are rare. The earliest examples concern children of poor immigrants who use the urban junior college as a necessary step on the way to a university degree.

3)The two-year college system is invisible in fiction for the sixteen years between 1953 and 1969.

4)The 1970's works feature the "runaway housewife," who is "punished" for presuming to attend college. She may gain, however, some control of her life, freedom from addictive behavior, and spiritual awakening.

5)The 1980's works are greater in number. The housewife continues, but other types appear, some fairly positive. The most common tone used by the authors towards the students is mockery.

6)There is a shift recently to mass media portrayals. The re-entry woman is still in evidence, but is no



longer the central figure. The range of attitude towards the students is wide, though most often the community college is a setting for comedy.

Students in their journals: 1)The student writers take an active part in planning their lives. They are not passive, waiting for life to happen, but are goal-oriented and reflective.

2)The students recognize their marginal status and resent it. Many organize in an attempt to correct unfair treatment. The negative image of the community college system is improving in some areas due to the reverse transfer phenomenon.

3)The students take joy in learning, especially in learning they are intelligent. They see themselves as maturing into independent adulthood, and are proud of their successes. Generally, their families are proud of them, also, as they write of more family or spousal support than opposition.

4)They use complex strategies to accomplish their goals. There is much stress in every life. Students at the wealthiest school seem to have fewer pressures, and may be able to complete tasks more easily.

5)The community college is a haven for many. It helps them raise their self-esteem, and is seen as a step in the right direction. Instances of growth and change for the better occur frequently.

6)There are complaints, especially about a large urban system, of hindering bureaucracies and poor counseling. However, in addition to the help that comes from excellent teachers, services are sometimes provided that increase the possibility of success.

Faculty in fiction: 1)The typical two-year college faculty character is a white male English instructor.

2)Compared to faculty at four-year colleges and universities, the two-year college teacher is almost invisible in American fiction.

3)Teaching is incidental in many of the works containing two-year college faculty. Thus, we can only surmise their quality as teachers, based on other facets of their lives.

4)The rare good teachers work hard to provide their students with an education, trying to be rigorous but fair. Most are also concerned with promoting transfer and with upward mobility in the work world.

5)The same increase in numbers of faculty characters occurs in the 1980's and 1990's as it does with student characters, and the same shift to portrayals in the mass media rather than in literary works.

6)The common tone is mockery, the usual genre comedy.

Faculty in their journals: 1)Faculty write consistently about their sense of mission. They wish to set high standards for their students and themselves, and help everyone reach those standards. They take pride in being teachers, and fight for their students and themselves.

2)They believe that people succeed or win by cooperating with others, not by conquest. The writers do not see themselves as helpless, pitiful victims, and they do not treat their students as such.

3)They educate themselves throughout their careers, striving to be better at what they do. They nurture their students in a professional manner.

4)The student writers are critical of some faculty, but praise far more, most commonly for caring, for being demanding, and for evoking the excitement of learning.

5)Faculty are keenly aware of the marginality of their students, both actual and perceived. They recount the human drama of students' often traumatic lives. The most commonly-observed student problem is inadequate preparation for college-level work.

6)Comparable images, descriptions and stories occur in each geographic area, to each racial or ethnic group. It is rarely possible to discern the race or ethnicity of the writers, or of the students they write about.

The experience of writing the journals: There was a relative willingness to write the journals, more than was anticipated. Possible reasons for this fall into the following categories:

1)The writers tried to make sense of their own lives. Some were conscious of this intent before they wrote; others only discovered their greater understanding of themselves after they had written.

2)Some so-called traditional "feminine" personality traits were operating. Some of those who were asked wished to be "good girls," to be helpful and cooperative, and felt guilty if they did not perform up to their own expectations.

3)The writers have something they want to say that they think is worth disseminating, and thought that I would help them be heard. They wish to speak for themselves as a part of a larger community of people in the same situation.

4)Characteristics of those who asked them to write may have been persuasive.

Conclusions: The contrast between the two images seems clear from these summaries. Where the fictional re-entry woman is passive and sees the two-year college as a place where decisions will be made for her, the actual re-entry woman is actively involved in planning her own life and sees the two-year college as a place that is helping her implement her plans. She may be incorrect in her assumptions, but this is her image.

The fictional student is usually living on the margins of society, but seldom questions the power structure that has placed her there, or even notices that there is a hierarchy of places, in which she is situated toward the bottom. The actual student resents the authoritarian arrangement that pushes her to the side, and often organizes with others to fight on one front or another.

The joy of learning that surfaces in the writing of the two-year college students appears in a few fictional depictions, but with nowhere near the same consistency. The difficulty that the re-entry woman has in juggling roles and schedules in order to attend college at all, even part-time, is shown occasionally in fiction; the student journals are almost universal in discussing this theme, and the stress that is associated with it.

A rare two-year college faculty member in fiction is a dedicated and competent teacher, nurturing students in a professional manner and striving to improve techniques, methodology and their understanding of students and subject matter. The journals depict such a teacher as one who can be found frequently in the actual classroom. The sense of mission and the cooperative spirit consistently expressed in the faculty journals is close to non-existent in fiction. In the fiction, the two-year college is more likely to contain close-to-dreadful, even villainous, teachers.

Almost no fictional faculty see teaching as a significant career, nor is it seen as valuable by other characters. The journal writing faculty, without exception, feel that what they and their colleagues are trying to do is clearly significant. For many of them, it is a serious "calling," followed with pride.

I am convinced that the demeaning generalizations about community college people come as much from class bias, sexism and racism as from any actual presence or absence of academic standards. Re-entry women often undergo a transformation that rewards any on the faculty who care to see it. Not the transformation into physical beauty that our fairy tales and advertising extol for women, but one marked by the joy of learning and accomplished in the face of adversity. The prize won is not a handsome prince, but one's own life. And their teachers are often dedicated people who maintain college standards despite overwork and a culture that considers them beneath notice.

Class bias, sexism and racism are also the key to the difference between the satirical portrayal common in fiction about four-year schools and the demeaning image given to two-year schools. There are no prestigious two-year colleges in fiction; no one envies a two-year college character. To spend one's life on their faculty is to be condemned to the abyss; to spend a lifetime at a university is at least an enviable sinecure. Satire is meant to be a weapon against the powerful; to demean two-year colleges for their marginalized inhabitants is very different than making fun of those at Ivy League schools.

In this study, I attempted to present a narrative collage of my two kinds of data, devoting most of my attention to a description of the images held by the two kinds of story-tellers, much of it taken directly from their words, rather than seeking any "causes" for those images. I tried to figure out some things we take for granted in our culture, challenging the "official" view by bringing previously unheard groups of people into the discourse. Society's negative definition of these millions of people does them unwarranted violence. Ways must be developed for their own stories to be heard by adult educators and others.



**TITLE:** DEVELOPING A VISION OF SOCIETY:  
TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING AND THE EMANCIPATORY  
PROCESS

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**ABSTRACT:** A qualitative study of women change agents suggests an envisioning process as a significant dynamic in commitment-making. This finding and the transformative learning which facilitated it are reviewed.

Research suggests that an envisioning process may be a significant dynamic in change agents' commitment-making to act for social reconstruction. This paper analyzes that finding which emerged in a qualitative study of women change agents and their consciousness-raising (Loughlin, in press). The discussion begins with an overview of the study and methodology. The second section identifies the transformative learning that facilitated these women's envisioning process, followed by an exploration of that vision-making process. Lastly, the implications of this finding for educational practice are suggested.

#### OVERVIEW OF STUDY AND METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the research was to gain insight into both the facilitator of consciousness-raising and the nature of this emancipatory process (Hart 1985, 1990; Mezirow, 1990, 1991). Consciousness-raising was defined as a transformation of consciousness in which individuals experienced a praxis--critical reflection and action--that develops "a deepened consciousness of their situation" leading them "to apprehend that situation as an historical reality susceptible of transformation" (Freire, 1982, p. 73).

The sample consisted of twenty-four Caucasian middle-class women who had experienced a transformation of consciousness related to women's issues. The criteria for selection included each woman's possessing a reflective awareness of her individual consciousness-raising and an ability to articulate that process. Additionally, each woman was acting for structural change of society through the fields of communications, politics, religion, or education.

Data was gathered using a field-tested semi-structured open-ended interview schedule. The transcribed interviews were analyzed using a modified form of the constant comparative method (Glasser & Strauss, 1967). To ensure credibility, the techniques of peer debriefing and member checks (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) were used.

The findings suggest that for these women the

primary transformative learning within consciousness-raising was learning to center their knowing process within their own experience (Cell, 1984). While the study disclosed other findings related to the nature of the transformative learning within the emancipatory process, this paper focuses on a specific finding: the envisioning process as a dynamic in change agents' commitment-making to act for social change. To provide context for understanding this finding, the transformative learning that contributed to the envisioning process is discussed first.

#### **TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING AND THE ENVISIONING PROCESS**

While each woman in the study detailed unique learning experiences within her consciousness-raising, the primary learning these women experienced was a transformation in their understanding of themselves as knowers. Specifically, they spoke of previously being alienated in their knowing and assuming a passive role by internalizing others' definitions of reality. When speaking of themselves as knowers, words such as "marginal," "outsider," and "imposter" dominated their descriptions.

For example, Tina, a woman in her forties who is an activist for the rights of incarcerated women, spoke clearly of her alienation. "I think the best way that I can identify it is that I was a 100% success model of what it meant to be a socialized female . . . I bought everything . . . I was trying to become something other and I was going through contortions, I tried to be something outside my own experience."

Similar to the other women in the study, Tina's transformation in knowing emerged in part through her empathic discussions with other women. In particular, she and an African-American woman "talked a lot about what it meant to be black and white." Tina recalled, "We struggled and she was probably most influential for me . . . That particular issue of racism helped me to come close to my own identification of feeling oppressed. Somehow they are very connected. I understood my own." Through developing empathic relationships with other women in which they reflected on their experiences, Tina began to critique societal norms and structures from her own perspective. The critique, affirmation, and support she experienced helped her "identify what was going on in" her life. As a knower, Tina recalled "[I came] to trust my experiences more than I ever did before. I just believe that I am capable of things that I probably never thought I had before." For the other women and Tina, this sense of agency in constructing their own knowledge became an emerging characteristic of their understanding of themselves as knowers.

This transformation from alienation in knowing to agency, therefore, was characterized by each woman's

centering her knowing in her own unique experiences. Adrienne, a leader for radical reform within the Catholic Church, described the beginnings of her centering.

Almost the sense of being a unique person--that's probably the biggest change for me in consciousness-raising. That I wasn't one of many. That somehow I had a unique gift to offer . . . Almost as if I had a sense of my personhood . . . I think that's something that slowing grew in me and is still growing. The way I respond to it today is almost a growing sense of my own authority. That indeed I have a certain amount of authority--the authoring of one's life.

This awareness of the possibility of authorship, of being the creator of one's life and knowledge emerged as a pivotal insight for each of the women in her transformation. Patricia, a feminist philosopher and writer, recalled this recognition in relation to the academy. "I sort of move outside the academic world, and rather than feeling that I had failed at it, I began that slow process to say that it was failing women." She continued: "I began to try to develop a perspective--though it is feminist--it is somehow rooted in the life I lead as a woman, which I had previously thought that the whole problem was that I was too caught up in that life as a woman."

For Tina--who came to trust her experiences, for Adrienne--who discovered a sense of uniqueness, for Patricia--who embraced the life she led as a woman, and for the other women in the study, each began to assume the role of author in relation to the known (Kegan, 1982).

To summarize, this transformative learning involved a movement from alienation to agency in knowing. This sense of agency was manifested by centering knowing in one's unique experiences. This centering, thus, transformed the relationship between the knower and the known to one in which the woman became "author" and the knowledge created reflected her authenticity. It was this centered and authentic knowing which made the envisioning process possible.

#### **THE ENVISIONING PROCESS AND COMMITMENT-MAKING**

Each woman's personal transformation to a centered knowing created the opportunity not only to be the author of her knowing, but also to connect that knowing to public issues with a corresponding critique of the societal norms and structures--the first step in the envisioning process. Similar to Tina's experience discussed earlier, Miriam, a political scientist and author, spoke of this connection and her corresponding critique.

I suppose the major change is the recognition that there were certain kinds of issues,

questions, and problems that come up over and over again for lots of women, not just myself. . . . There were real issues--there were structural questions in terms of how the world was organized that imposed these questions.

This ability to identify the underlying structural causes of societal oppression was manifested by each woman. Similar to the other women in the study, Patricia, philosopher and author, also judged the societal influence on women's experience as "far more complicated. I see it as a world that has been created against the interest of women and against things I care very much about."

The distinguishing characteristic that accompanied these women's awareness of oppression was their willingness and inner freedom to imagine, to see an opening beyond that oppression, a vision of a transformed society--the second step in the envisioning process.

For Miriam, this capacity to imagine and see an opening beyond the traditional methodologies of political science "that looked at human beings and then systematically excluded some kinds of questions. And that in a sense I was obligated to go forth and fight, fight this stuff." It was her commitment to realizing her vision of inclusiveness that motivated her action--the final step of the envisioning process. She stated, "I believe that transformation in the way we think and write and do scholarship is doing structural change. it offers all kinds of possibilities." Concretely, her commitment to realize her vision motivated her to include in her scholarship "the voices of people who don't have access to the media or don't like books and those who aren't quoted in the New York Times and all of that. Human beings with complicated lives, sometimes desperate lives and so on. So I would say I'm more in tune with them."

In like manner, Patricia acknowledged that the oppressive structures of militarism "have to be changed," and she, thus, imagined a world community in a harmonious relationship. It was commitment to realizing this vision that motivated her action. She detailed, "My interest in structural change in society is very much tied to peace politics. And in the book I'm writing it involves feminist peace politics . . . and I think that feminist peace politics can make a distinctive contribution, and I see myself doing it in a very tiny way in helping to develop peace politics."

The envisioning process described by Miriam and Patricia also characterized the experience of all participants in the study. Each connected her personal knowledge to public issues with a corresponding critique. This awareness was accompanied by her willingness and inner freedom to imagine, to see an



opening beyond that oppression, a vision of a transformed society founded in the values of "preservation, growth and acceptability" [in a humanistic sense] (Ruddick, 1980, p. 359). Lastly, each developed a commitment to realize this vision which motivated action.

In summary, the women in this study were able to transcend alienation through centering their knowing in authenticity. This transformation in knowing, then, facilitated an envisioning process characterized by critique, imagination, and commitment.

#### IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATIONAL PRACTICE

The insights which these women shared into the learning that leads to agency and an envisioning process suggest several implications. Of these, reflection on personal experience is an essential dynamic of a transformative learning process. We, as adult educators, acknowledge the relevance of including learners' experiences into the educational encounter. This study, however, suggests the primacy of reflecting on experience as an essential dynamic of the learning process. Furthermore, facilitating explorations into the interconnections between individuals' experiences and societal norms and structures can provide a context for developing informed opinions about public policy and decision-making.

Another implication for practice is the importance of designing opportunities to explore the diverse ways of knowing which individuals use to make meaning of their life experiences. Within these discussions, attention to individualized styles of knowing and learning can lead to an empathic understanding of the differences between individuals, as well as the similarities that unite them.

Also, this study suggests the importance of fostering the use of learners' imagination and providing opportunities for choice. For example, the introduction of the arts into the educational encounter can sensitize and broaden understanding of others' realities through exercising imagination. Additionally, incorporating opportunities for meaningful choice in solving contemporary societal problems which reach out into the local community can challenge learners' imaginations and creativity.

While other implications for practice might be offered, the importance of attending to the primacy of experience, the diversity of knowing, and the exercise of imagination and choice appears to be intimately connected to these women's emancipatory process. It remains a continuing challenge to adult educators to design learning experiences that reflect these qualities.

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THE INSTITUTIONAL WIFE SYNDROME:  
A METAPHOR GROUNDED IN REALITY

By

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Virginia G. Gonzalez

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ABSTRACT

The metaphor, institutional wife syndrome, provided a basis on which to examine women's experience in higher education administration. Subsequent research was conducted to examine the effect of this metaphor in transforming perspective.

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Explaining, understanding, and making meaning is an integral part of adult learning. The purpose of this paper is to describe how the use of metaphor "institutional wife syndrome" assisted women administrators in higher education in examining their experience and in transforming their perspective. The "institutional wife syndrome" is defined as behaviors transferred by women from their socially and culturally ascribed roles as wives and mothers in family structures to their professional obligations and position responsibilities in organizational settings. These behaviors focus on caretaking and nurturing of others, task maintenance, and enabling or the "everything will be all right" activities that promote productive functioning of institutions.

Adult learning literature generally focuses on transformative learning as a process triggered by a disorienting dilemma or by a series of transitions leading to critical reflection of assumptions and meaning schemes, resulting in changes in behavior and actions (Mezirow, 1991). While Mezirow describes learning through metaphors in terms of making "correlations between the experience perceived and something known" (p. 80), he does not discuss the use of metaphors as a strategy for facilitating transformative learning or as a trigger for perspective transformation. Reason and Hawkins (1988) suggest that "expression of experience, and thus inquiry into meaning" (p. 80) is important for understanding experience; the use of metaphors is significant to this process of inquiry. Sackmann (1989) states that "metaphors can refocus the familiar and show it in a new light which is a necessary first step of a transformative process" (p. 463). For this paper, the use of a metaphor served as a means for women in higher education to examine their roles, their manner of meeting responsibilities within those roles, and their understanding of the value of those roles within the institution. Further, the metaphor itself was re-examined as a means for stimulating or bringing about changes in perspective and transformative learning.

METHOD

Eight women representing lower and middle management positions in colleges were selected to be interviewed. A qualitative approach using semi-structured interviews was

employed. Two interview guides were constructed. The purpose of the first interview guide was to explore and validate the concept of the institutional wife syndrome. The second interview guide was formulated to document the impact of the metaphor of the institutional wife syndrome on the women's subsequent perceptions, decisions, and actions in the workplace.

The first round of interviews was held during Fall, 1991. With the exception of one interview, all interviews were held on the campus of the woman being interviewed. The interviews were approximately one hour in length. The second round of interviews was held during Fall, 1992. Again, all the interviews were held on the interviewee's campus and were approximately 30 to 45 minutes in length. The data was coded and analyzed using a grounded theory approach (Strauss and Corbin, 1990).

## FINDINGS

### Initial Interviews

The eight women interviewed all perceived differences between the way they perform their primary responsibilities and the way in which they perceive their male colleagues or superiors perform their responsibilities.

- \* As a woman, I am more sensitive, more aware of how the (organisational) culture affects people, how it affects their work, how it impacts the stuff that falls between the cracks. That is some of the stuff that some of the men are not as attuned to...
- \* One thing especially is that I find a lot more... women like to see things through to completion...just about everything, whether it be a major project or a small, incidental project. I see that happening a lot more in women than I do in men...For the most part, women try to take and resolve all differences and problems in a situation that a lot of times men don't think about...

Asked to draw parallels between their behavior within the context of their home and family roles and their work roles, the women in this study did so readily.

- \* At home, I have no one to delegate it to...So in my job, I don't tend to delegate...Because at home, I've never delegated it. I've taken care of it myself...
- \* A wife will do anything to make a house run and I think a woman will do anything to make an institution go...
- \* I'm more sensitive to the people who work for me; I understand issues and I understand juggling schedules.

When presented with the term "institutional wife" and its definition, seven of the eight women immediately saw personal relevance of the term. Two of the women felt that although the term was probably more descriptive of other women in the institution, it held less meaning for themselves and for the way they operated within their institutions. The majority of women, however, were able to apply the concept and began to analyze the dynamics of being an institutional wife within their institutions.

- \* The wife is generally thought of as the person who picks up and notices and pulls together and assures that the details



are attended to and that thoughts are consoled...and that happens (at work)...that's what I think women have been doing forever...as we get more into those middle management positions, we're just assuring that things around us are done correctly...

- \* We are rewarded in some respects (by being institutional wives) to middle management...a 'slight reward'...We can be rewarded by our supervisor because we make that person look good...
- \* I think it's a benefit for a man to have an institutional wife working for him because so many of the details are being taken care of...
- \* We're more of a nurturing, helping kind of group, so we get the assistant type positions.

The most devastating consequence of being an excellent institutional wife for most of the women interviewed was the lack of upward mobility. As occurs with many wives and mothers at home, the taken-for-granted responsibilities of those roles did not necessarily translate into their supervisors perceiving and supporting their upward management potential. This lack of recognition for the accomplishments and abilities left many of the women frustrated. As with housewives attempting to enter and transfer skills into the workplace, these women tend to be disregarded in advancement considerations.

- \* A wife really should be a partner, but it's not an equal partnership in the institution, because a lot of the women are in the lower management positions, as opposed to the upper management positions. They're in helping kinds of relationships and in facilitating, but not in decision-making positions, or policy-making positions.

One woman was especially eloquent regarding this dilemma.

- \* They (males in upper management) don't necessarily reward hard work, dedication, love of the institution--they don't necessarily reward these things. So what is it that they reward? I can't get a handle on it. If I could just get a handle on it, on what they reward, I'd give them what they want...because I think I have the potential, I think I have the qualities.

#### Follow-up Interviews

Approximately a year later, a second round of interviews was conducted with the same participants. The purpose of these interviews was to document how the metaphor of the institutional wife assisted the women in understanding their own experiences as administrators and in gaining insight into their own behaviors and that of others. Of particular interest was determining if the women had experienced transformation within their lives. It should be noted that of the eight participants interviewed, five of the women had changed their work roles; four had received promotions or had changed jobs and one had decided to move from administration to faculty. Three had experienced no change.

In questioning the interviewees about changes in how they approached their position responsibilities differently in the past year, the responses varied. Some reported personal or behavioral changes.

- \* I've been doing more delegating.
- \* I feel like I've grown the last few months.

One woman had demanded a promotion, others reported limited or no change.

- \* I did think about my reactions to certain situations, after I reacted my normal spontaneous way, the way I have reacted for the past 7 or 8 years...but as far as making a conscious decision of changing whatever, I don't think I have...

Five of the women, however, could specify behavior or attitude changes subsequent to the first series of interviews regarding the institutional wife syndrome.

- \* ...perhaps one of the reasons I had some difficulty at the upper administrative level is because I don't act like an institutional wife...the result on me is to start looking more intentionally to find an option to leave.
- \* I did change my approach...as a strategy, we have to be aware of the institutional wife syndrome and any other dysfunctional family activities because that is what it is. And if we lose sight of that, then we're really not any good to ourselves or to the institution.

All eight women commented on the usefulness of the institutional wife metaphor as creating a heightened awareness of otherwise elusive dynamics within the institution.

- \* It's putting a term on something that we all know exists.
- \* It's a little easier...to pinpoint what's going on.
- \* The whole idea of "institutional wife" has made things more clear to how and why they happen and why I might make decisions about things.
- \* There was frustration that wasn't tied to anything tangible. I couldn't figure out why I was being frustrated. Now I can look at it and say "Yeah, that's because I'm behaving like an institutional wife."

The critical question was whether any of the women felt that the use of the institutional wife metaphor helped them to transform their perceptions of themselves as individuals or their behavior in the institution. For four women, the heightened awareness did not translate into changed behavior or action.

- \* I still find myself very much following the pattern that it entails...and it carries; it so closely resembles what goes on at home, so that it indeed is an institutional wife.
- \* I think I recognize when I'm in that syndrome when I'm doing things that are typically "institutional wife" things. I recognize them as such. I don't know if I have changed anything but recognizing it makes it easier to handle.

Several women focused on the lack of personal empowerment they felt to change conditions for themselves or within the institution, even though they felt they had transformed their perceptions of themselves or their roles within the institution.

- \* The institutional wife kinds of things, the things that disappoint us all, have gotten stronger.
- \* The fact is we are wives...we do not have power.

For four women, however, the metaphor of institutional wife was pivotal not only to increased self-awareness, but also for a transformed plan of action.

- \* I really made a decision that I couldn't continue to function this way.
- \* I'm just not going to put up with (being treated like an institutional wife).

#### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions or points of view derived from this research indicate that women see parallels between their home roles and their work roles, according to sociocultural patterns. The use of the metaphor--institutional wife syndrome--assisted both in labeling and understanding the behaviors or roles the women interviewed had assumed. Some of the women interviewed had already separated from the paradigm of "female" behavior, but had not clearly understood that they had made such a change, until they considered the metaphor in light of their own experience. Others had assumed a leadership style associated more with a collaborative/feminist paradigm, but realized that this style was largely unrecognized and/or unappreciated in their work settings.

The recognition and naming of the metaphor, institutional wife syndrome, while providing a change in perspective for many of the women interviewed, did not necessarily result in behavior changes or in a sense of empowerment. Indeed, the recognition of the reality of the metaphor seemed to demonstrate to many of the women a sense of their lack of power within their institutions. Most clearly, the metaphor seemed to provide a focusing of the women's perspectives of their work behaviors or the work behaviors of other women. The limitation of the use of the metaphor as used in this study is that its focus is on the individual, rather than on a collective sharing of experience. It is possible that the lack of collective sharing of experience with respect to the metaphor led many of the participants to feel a sense of isolation and lack of power, as opposed to feeling a sense of empowerment.

The significance of this research to the field of adult education is two-fold. The first aspect is utilizing metaphors as a means for facilitating perspective transformation or transformative learning in adults. The literature most prominent in the field with respect to adult learning focuses on critical reflection as the primary learning vehicle in transformative learning. It seems prudent and necessary to explore other facilitative strategies for transformative learning, such as making use of metaphors as a means for making meaning of experience. The second aspect with respect to the significance of this research is the use of metaphors in qualitative research. In terms of describing and understanding experience and learning, the use of metaphors may be as justifiable or informative as the use of questionnaires, observations, and critical incidents for gaining further insight into people's perceptions of their learning. As Miles and Huberman (1984) indicate, metaphors can serve as powerful descriptors or as devices for data-reducing, pattern-making, de-centering, or connecting theories to findings. Further research needs to be conducted to explore the use of

metaphors as an alternate research tool.

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## **LIVING AND LEARNING: STRATEGIES FOR SURVIVAL IN A LITERATE WORLD**

by Juliet Merrifield and Mary Beth Bingman

### **Abstract**

Adults with low literacy skills have developed strategies to deal with literacy demands and to learn in their everyday lives. This qualitative research project profiled living and learning by twelve diverse adults.

### **Introduction**

We know little of the everyday lives of adults with low literacy skills who enroll in literacy programs, and even less of those who do not. Only a few researchers have conducted ethnographic studies on everyday literacy which give us insights into how adults with limited literacy negotiate common literacy tasks (including Heath, 1983; Fingeret, 1982; Zeigahn, 1990; Gowen, 1990).

Our lack of knowledge is even more striking when one looks at how adults with limited literacy deal with changing technology in everyday life. Yet the current national concern about adult literacy is based in part on assumptions that literacy skills are essential to learn to use technology efficiently, as well as to process information and solve problems.

Our research set out to examine these assumptions through in-depth profiles of the lives of individuals with limited literacy, with a special focus on their everyday uses of literacy and technology. The research was conducted for the Office of Technology Assessment, U.S. Congress, by teams of researchers at the Center for Literacy Studies, The University of Tennessee and at the Center for Adult Education, San Francisco State University.

Researchers conducted twelve in-depth profiles with adult men and women in four states in Appalachia and the West Coast. The six West Coast profiles were conducted with limited-English-proficient immigrants to the United States from Asia, Africa, Russia and Latin America, ranging from some who had been highly educated in their own countries, to those who were not literate in any language. The six Appalachian profiles included whites, African Americans and a Mexican American, with literacy levels ranging from almost total non-reader to close to GED level.

Qualitative research methods included a series of in-depth interviews, focusing on life histories, educational histories, and uses of literacy and technology. Following a review of the literature, we developed a list of questions we believed would elicit from people their perspectives and meanings in regard to uses of literacy and technology. In addition to the taped interviews we used field notes, participant observation, archival materials, and additional interviews to deepen our understanding of what we had heard. For instance we interviewed the manager of a restaurant to learn more about the literacy

requirements of one participant's job. We looked at materials children brought home from school, church bulletins, restaurant tickets. We noted the surroundings in which people lived and worked, and in almost every case, the interviewer had some knowledge of the participant's community context. Research team discussions identified emerging themes, compared and refined themes, and identified additional data needed. The collaboration drew on the researchers' diversity of experience, and greatly strengthened this work.

### **The people**

Our findings refute many of the stereotypes about people whose literacy skills are limited, stereotypes on which public policy is often based. These twelve people value education and are committed to better education for their children. They work hard and overcome many difficulties.

Tom Addington (a pseudonym) is a twenty-seven year old farmworker. He lives with his wife and three young children in a four-room frame house on a farm in Scott County, Virginia. He left high school without graduating and reads with difficulty, around 3rd grade level. His main wage-earning job is cutting tobacco. He also does other seasonal farm work and digs ginseng to sell. He has neither a car nor a driver's license.

As Tom thinks about his life and what he hopes to do, his plans are made around meeting the needs of his children.

*I look forward to moving on now. I got a family of my own, I gotta try and take care of them, maybe satisfy them. If I don't end up with a lot myself, I'd just like to see them be happy and get what they want.*

His hopes for "moving on" include raising his own crop of tobacco as a sharecropper or perhaps to get a "public" (wage-paying) job as a carpenter or mechanic. Now most of Tom's life is taken up with work. His activities outside his family and work are limited by lack of transportation. He watches a little television, a baseball or football game when he gets the time and goes hunting, but "...the biggest majority of the time I'm always doin' something or other, piddlin' around the farm, maybe buildin' a fence or something."

Moving on may be difficult because of Tom's limited literacy skills. He blames both himself and his schooling for this limited skill.

*I wasn't learning nothing, they just passed me to get rid of me. They'd send me down on the ball field, rake the ball field off or tell me to go to sleep or something or other. They never would try to learn me how to read or nothing like that... You know I was willin' to learn... But it just seems like it wasn't for me to learn how to read or something or other.*

Tom reads signs and brand names and recognizes his bills, but has trouble with "big words." His wife reads his mail for him and reads to the children. But although his reading is very limited, he uses math well. He operates primarily in a cash economy and is careful to shop for the best prices. In his work in tobacco he uses math to figure what to charge the farmer.

The technology Tom encounters in his personal life is limited both because he lives and works in a rural area and because of his limited income. In his work Tom operates various machines - tractors, tobacco setters, front-end loaders, chain saws. But he seldom encounters computerized technology. Local banks don't have cash machines and in any case he doesn't have an account. He does not use credit cards. He doesn't have a telephone.

While Tom's literacy skills are limited, he has learned to do many things. He knows what needs to be done to grow tobacco and in what sequence these steps are taken. He uses agricultural chemicals and determines how much of what he needs. He has skills as a mechanic. He gardens and knows his environment as a hunter and an herb digger. In none of these areas did his knowledge come from literacy and schooling. He does think that more reading ability would benefit his work, but he has been able to work at farming for sixteen years. Tom talked about how he learned about farming.

*Well, what I've learned, I've learned off of other people. Cause I don't read nothing like that, can't read, so what I've pretty well learned I learned off other people. I've helped a lot of people and people showed me how to do stuff like that.*

Lisa Bogan is a thirty-seven year old African American woman. She was born and educated in rural Mississippi and lived there until she came to Knoxville with her first husband in 1973. Separated now from her second husband, Lisa is struggling to overcome the effects of an abusive marriage and provide for her two children. Lisa was the fourth of seven children. She completed high school in rural Mississippi, but says she stopped learning after the sixth grade.

*I guess when I got, uh, sixth grade, that was it. I don't understand math anymore. My reading, I'm in sixth grade, spelling sixth grade. It was like I just couldn't learn anymore, when I reached that sixth grade level. But I did enough to make the grade. I studied. I understood some things but some things I just didn't understand as I grew older in high school. So I guess I just give up on it myself.*

Lisa has worked at many jobs in factories, a deli, and a school cafeteria. She is currently a clerk in a mall department store. She has two teenage children from her first marriage and is pleased with the job she has done raising her children. She has high hopes for their futures.

*And my children, I feel like they're goin' do real good because they're so many children on drugs and they abuse their parents, and my children respects me so far and not on drugs or anything and real mannerable children. And I think I have done a terrific job there, a terrific job.*

Lisa seems to handle her encounters with everyday literacy quite well. She is able to follow directions especially well if they are illustrated.

*I do good in reading directions on things. Even when I would buy things for Christmas and had to put things together, I could read the directions*

*and put it together. And somehow I just look at it, uh the way they have it drawn out and put it together... And whatever it is I don't know, I go and look it up in the dictionary and I know the meaning of it.*

Lisa is also able to use maps and road signs effectively. She attributes this ability to common sense. Effective use of organizational skills helps Lisa run her household efficiently, enabling her to live on her salary from a part-time job, child support, social security disability and a rent subsidy.

*I understand everything in the grocery store that I go into at. And it takes me forever to be in that store. I check the prices, the name brand, the non-name brand, what's a better buy.*

Church is important to Lisa, and she makes a special effort to keep up with Sunday School lessons. Her poor reading ability may be an obstacle, but by reading at home and using a dictionary she prepares her lesson. She also learns by listening.

*I just kinda learn from what's being said and taught and reading over the Bible and someone explaining that verse in the Bible, learning that way. And a lot of things that have been said in the Sunday School ... I had when I was a child at home. And all the things that are bein' said I already know them.*

Lisa's salesclerk job involves only a minimal amount of reading and writing and poses little problem for her, although the computerized cash register intimidates her, and she avoids using it.

*Yes, it's a little reading in that and writing. Because, O.K. how I get back through that, if the customer want to hold something, a item, uh, I have to put their telephone number, their name, and address. O.K. they tell me these things. And I do good on it. If I don't know how to spell their name, I just ask them to spell that for me. And they do. So I get by with that.*

Lisa does not come into contact with much technology at home now, since her VCR, microwave and Atari games were stolen. But she says she was comfortable learning to use these things.

*I did real good with all of it. I'm a person that more so stay to myself to learnin' somethin'. If I can't I need someone to show me how to do this. And once they show me how and I can deal with it, but if I feel like I can do it on my own I just need to get in a room quiet to myself and I can work with it.*

### **Strategies to meet literacy demands**

The uses and demands for literacy which people encounter in their everyday lives are mediated in part by their social context -- where they live, what their jobs are, their involvement in organizations and communities. They are also influenced by cultural and personal factors -- how they grew up, their families' expectations and literacy practices, their own expectations of themselves.



Ability to read is only part of the picture: we interviewed people who could read, but didn't much, and people with limited reading ability who used text in a variety of ways. These individuals use literacy in much the same way as those with higher skills. They read labels and maps, many correspond with their families, read magazines and church bulletins, use dictionaries and phone books. They pay bills, write notes and shopping lists, and fill in forms.

However, all experience literacy demands which are beyond their own literacy skills. We identified four main types of strategies they used to meet these demands: **other-oriented strategies**, which include asking others for information, and using other oral sources and observation; **self-reliance strategies**, including guessing, memorization, and selective use of text; **avoidance** of difficult or potentially difficult situations; and **use of technology for literacy**, such as TVs, VCRs, tape recorders.

Most people use more than one of these strategies in their lives. They have a battery of strategies from which they select what is most appropriate for any situation. Which strategy they select seems to depend in part on the task or literacy demand, in part on the context (home, work, out and about), and in part on personal preference. We saw no consistent differences in the patterns of strategies used by native and non-native English speakers, except in use of technology for literacy, which was more extensive among the Californians.

### **Learning strategies**

In a print-based society, and if one is well-schooled, it is common to assume that literacy is the skill that pre-dates all others -- the skill one acquires first, in order to learn everything else. Often, people with highly developed literacy skills will use them in learning practical skills -- gardening, cooking, how to fix a car or program a VCR. One reads a book or manual. By implication, adults who do not read well cannot learn.

Yet the people we profiled demonstrate a wealth of learning experiences in their lives. All were able to describe strategies for learning that they have used in relation to particular tasks. Understanding the everyday learning strategies of adults with low literacy skills may be an important step in helping them use these strategies for greater success in adult education programs.

Everyone talked about more than one learning strategy, and most had quite a wide array of learning strategies, a "toolbox" from which they could choose for particular tasks. The strategies fall into two major types: **Other-oriented learning strategies** include visual strategies (watching others, having someone show how to do something) and oral strategies (asking others, listening to explanations) and also cooperative learning with others (working together to figure something out). **Self reliance learning strategies** include practice and repetition for learning, selective use of text (like a dictionary, a map,

directions), trial and error (learning from experience), and for a few people a systematic step-by-step approach to learning ("first I try this, then I try that").

Often people combine strategies. They may watch someone else do something then use trial and error. They may use text and listen to others for confirmation. Some people seem more comfortable with certain strategies than others, but everyone uses more than one learning strategy. Some strategies seem better suited to certain tasks than others. For example, repetition and practice were especially used by people in formal education programs and were used little in everyday tasks. Trial and error seems to be a strategy especially used with technology (not unlike people with higher literacy skills).

### **Implications for practice**

Could literacy programs capitalize on the literacy strategies and learning strategies that students have already developed and used in everyday life? Students and teachers may unconsciously assume that learning academic skills requires special strategies which must be taught. Our research leads us to suggest that teachers inquire about their students' everyday learning strategies, and work with them to apply these to learning academic skills.

There are also specific implications for instructional approaches in our research. For example, most people we profiled use text in a variety of ways, including as a learning tool. They are limited in their literacy abilities, but still use maps, dictionaries, labels and selected parts of newspapers to get and confirm information. Teachers could explicitly teach use of text in these ways as a practical skill and also as supporting acquisition of more academic skills.

At the broadest level, our research asks that we rethink our assumptions about adults with low literacy skills. We did not find victims, helpless or hopeless people. We found strong, capable and hard-working people, who are struggling with great resourcefulness to cope with hard times. They value education for themselves and their children, have hopes and dreams for the future. They are marginalized by society, as much because of poverty as because of lack of skills. An adult literacy system that was adequately funded and well prepared could help people capitalize on their strengths, further develop their skills, and open up to them more employment opportunities. But we can also learn from their creativity, determination and spirit.

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## **How Adults Learn: the Meaning of Adult Education**

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The process of critical reflection, rational discourse and reflective action is central to significant adult learning. This process implies criteria for planning emancipatory adult learning and education and for envisioning a learning society.

### **How Adults Learn**

If you read a book, see a play, a dance performance or a painting and you don't understand what is being communicated to you, it may not bother you. You may shrug it off as opaque, meaningless, irrelevant, quixotic or aberrant. We often do this with anomalies; do you remember the first time you encountered a play by Genet, a dance choreographed by Meredith Monk or the art of Dan Flavin?

If we subsequently encounter an interpretation by others whom we believe to be informed and objective - perhaps the remark of a friend, someone knowledgeable in your college class or the review of a critic - that helps you fit the experience into your meaning schemes, we appropriate it. We may have a half-formed idea which gets more fully developed in a dialectical relationship with the other's view. Often the other person can help us gain insight by providing us with a metaphor which enables us to make a relevant analogy between what we experienced and what we know. We often make sense of new experience by identifying it using metaphors. Sometimes we gain only a partial insight from a remark of another, but this enables us to reframe our ideas so as to redirect subsequent inquiry. Often we learn about something unknown by a different viewpoint serving as a new vantage point for interpretation. This process of discourse is the way we learn.

We close ourselves off from other interpretations in many ways. We can be simply preoccupied elsewhere and fail to closely attend the meaning of what is being communicated. We can make an interpretation that is concrete when what is communicated requires an abstract orientation. We can focus on a part when what we should be looking at is the whole.

We can discount strange experience as distasteful, distorted, trivial, inappropriate, extremist, foreign, dogmatic, obscure, biased, vulgar, jarring, sick, confused, stupid, untrue or unauthentic. We may be simply too threatened by the apparent meaninglessness of what is being

communicated to want to deal with it and resort to such psychological defense mechanisms as projection or rationalization to cope with it.

If you think you understand at least some of what is communicated and encounter a person with a different interpretation of the meaning, a different perspective or point of view, and you are motivated to want to resolve the discrepancies, then you will have to determine the relative truth or validity of your old belief and the new one.

There are three ways to do this. If the issue pertains to instrumental learning - controlling the environment or other people -you can determine what is true (in accord with what has been asserted) by an empirical test. If the issue pertains to communicative learning - learning what people mean- this often involves values, ideals, moral decisions, feelings and normative concepts not often amenable to empirical tests. In communicative learning you may determine the validity (justification) of competing assertions either by turning to tradition, authority, politics or brute force or you may seek a best judgment through rational discourse.

In rational discourse, you rely on those whom you believe to be the most informed, objective and rational to assess the arguments, examine the evidence and arrive at the best rational consensus feasible, given what is known at the time. At least their input will enable you to make a temporary decision about the relative validity of the alternative ideas. As we take action on our new insight or from our new perspective and still other arguments and evidence are advanced, we repeat this process of rational discourse. Rational discourse is a continuing process rather than an act leading to a final judgment. The criteria by which a viewpoint or belief is justified through discourse include the degree to which it is inclusive, differentiating, permeable (open to other viewpoints) and integrative of experience.

It is not always possible to resolve differences with others through discourse. There are areas of disagreement predicated upon metaphysical assumptions when perspectives about the nature of reality are too divergent to permit a consensus. We simply decide to allow these differences of perspective to exist and go about our lives together. In addition to consensus, discourse can lead to establishment of common meanings for discussing differences, better understanding of differences, respect for another's point of view without accepting it or to irreconcilable and incommensurable difference.

Structures of Meaning A meaning perspective is a set of psychocultural assumptions, for the most part culturally assimilated but including intentionally learned theories, that serve as one of three sets of codes significantly shaping sensation and delimiting perception and cognition : *sociolinguistic*, ( e.g., social norms, cultural and language codes, ideologies, theories), *psychological* (e.g., repressed parental prohibitions which continue to block ways of feeling and acting) and



*epistemic* (e.g., learning styles, sensory learning preferences, focus on wholes or parts). Meaning perspectives are not simply categories for understanding; they also influence and delimit the horizons of our expectations.

These abstract meaning perspectives become articulated in a specific **meaning scheme** - the constellation of belief, knowledge, judgment, attitude and feeling which shape a particular interpretation, as when we think of a Hispanic person, an Irishman, a grandmother or a used car salesman. Meaning perspectives and meaning schemes are the structures of meaning. Both contribute to the frame of reference within which we engage in learning. Meaning schemes and perspectives selectively shape and delimit expectation, perception and cognition by predisposing our intentions and purposes, that is, setting our line of action. We have a strong tendency to reject ideas which fail to fit our preconceptions by labelling them aberrations, nonsense, weird or mistaken.

Transforming Meaning Structures While we assimilate and are guided by meaning perspectives and schemes, changing events in our lives can make us feel that old meaning perspectives have become dysfunctional, that no matter how much harder we try, things do not seem to fit old ways of seeing any longer. It is this kind of problem that leads many persons to psychotherapy. It is what happened to many thousands of women through consciousness raising in the context of the women's movement of recent years. The age old perspective limiting women to careers of wives, mothers, housekeepers and good neighbors was found too constricting and was replaced by a perspective which added a wide range of career options and new ways of redefining old relationships and oneself. The process of transformation is the same as that which Paulo Freire has called "conscientization." It is a generic process of adult learning.

We transform structures of meaning through **reflection**, understood here as a deliberate assessment of the justification for our beliefs, ideas and feelings. Ordinary reflection involves a conscious assessment of the nature and consequences of these learnings. The kind of reflection which includes and relates the circumstances of their origin with their nature and consequence can be understood as **critical reflection**. It should be apparent how this natural mode of adult thought has been overlooked by the behaviorists, whose positivist-instrumentalist mode of analysis traditionally limits inquiry to the nature and consequences of an activity. This is the reason why behavioristic inquiry has served us poorly as an approach for understanding how adults learn.

When we reflectively assess or reassess the *content* or *process* of problem solving, we can often transform our meaning schemes. If the problem is to assess whether George is bad, *content reflection* might cause us to reassess those bad things George has done. *Process*

*reflection* might ask whether we have generalized about George's bad behavior from too limited a number of observations or perhaps we have overlooked his redeeming acts and have judged too hastily. Reflecting on content or process is the way we always change our minds about any experience to improve performance and may result in a transformation of our meaning scheme.

*Premise reflection* might cause us to ask why we are justified in judging George bad or good in the first place. What is it about the way we see other people that compels us to make such a summary value judgment? When we critically reflect on the *premise* or presupposition of the problem, we are often able to transform a meaning perspective. Critical reflection is the process by which we engage in premise reflection.

Reflection is the process by which we change our minds, literally and figuratively. It is the process of turning our attention to the justification for what we know, feel, believe and act upon. We reflect by critically reassessing the assumptions we have taken for granted which prop up the way we think and feel. We look critically at how we acquired our assumptions and their consequences in action or in our feelings.

Reflection - "attending to the grounds of our beliefs" - is the means of effecting change in our meaning structures, but responding to feelings, intuition and dreams are elements in reflection as well. These ways of knowing can serve as cues to help us assess the rational decisions we make.

The process of making an interpretation in a new situation involves an activity sequence something like this: a sense perception > scanning > imagining >< intuiting > projecting a meaning perspective >< sometimes reflecting on its appropriateness > interpreting >< intuiting > acting >< sometimes reflecting > acting upon reflection (praxis). Intuition guides our imaginative formulation of what we experience and serves as a check on our final interpretation.

### **The Meaning of Adult Education**

The need to understand the meaning of our experiences is perhaps our most human characteristic. Making meaning through critical reflection, rational discourse and action is central to adult learning in modern societies. Adult education is the process of facilitating this process. This centrally involves individuals learning to make their own meanings, purposes and values rather than assimilating those of others. The ideal conditions for fostering freer and fuller participation in discourse provides us with a firm foundation for formulating both social and educational goals.

The Ideal Conditions of Discourse Under ideal conditions of discourse, implicit in the very nature of human communication, participants will: (1) have accurate and complete information, (2) be free from coercion and distorting self-deception, (3) be able to weigh evidence and assess arguments objectively, (4) be open to alternative points of view - to care about the way others think and feel, (5) be able to become critically reflective upon assumptions and presuppositions and their consequences, (6) have equal opportunity to participate in the various roles of discourse, and (7) be willing to accept an informed objective, and rational consensus as a legitimate test of validity until new perspectives, evidence or arguments are encountered and are subsequently established through discourse as yielding better judgments.

Ideals enable us to set standards against which to judge performance and to provide us with goals and a heuristic sense of direction. Acquiring critical judgment, involving rational discourse, appears to be related to education and aging. The assumptions of rational discourse are : (1) beliefs should contain no logical contradictions, (2) reasons for believing them can be advanced and assessed, (3) concepts will become more intelligible when analyzed and (4) we have criteria with which to know when the belief is justified or not. Even the most extreme post-modernist writers who argue that rationality and discourse is impossible and universal constructs are invalid, implicitly accept these universal "rules."

The ideal conditions for discourse are also ideal conditions for adult learning and education and for a learning society. Adult education attempts to redress distortions in communication and learning caused by power and influence by creating "free space" in protected learning environments in diverse settings in which the practice of freedom, democratic participation, tolerance, equality and justice - all implicit in the ideal - become norms for rational discourse.

Discourse involves critical reflection of assumptions, including social assumptions. Reflection on the origins, nature and consequences of such presuppositions behind social practices and norms leads to informed social action to effect needed changes in society. Social action is not always dependent upon prior reflection on social assumptions, but this is the only kind of praxis with which adult educators -as educators - may be appropriately associated.

Adult Education for Social Action. Adult education for social action involves three phases in a process: (1) creating awareness of the need for change by critical reflection and the introduction of new perspectives, (2) encouraging affective learning leading to a feeling of solidarity with others committed to change and (3) facilitating instrumental learning about how to overcome situational, emotional or knowledge constraints on action. The process of transformative learning for social change leads from awareness to solidarity to action. Awareness without action is an

abortion of the learning process. Not every adult educator is in a position to provide assistance to learners in all three phases of the process.

As progress in transformative learning is dependent upon progressive realization of the ideal conditions of discourse, adult educators are committed to changing social practices, institutions and systems to make them more responsive to transformative learning needs. Emancipatory (critically reflective) participation in democracy is the means and the end of both personal and social development. There is no short cut to emancipatory participation in democracy. The assumed values of adult education are those involved in *an organized effort to assist individuals to learn to take action guided by a perspective which is more inclusive, discriminating, permeable and integrative of experience*. Emancipatory action may be achieved only through critical discourse. This Transformation Theory of adult learning is an expression of democratic culture: it demands that we become aware of how we come to our knowledge and about the values that lead us to our meaning perspectives. As individuals, we are accountable for what we know and how we have come to know it. Effective learners in a emancipatory, participative, democratic society - a learning society - become a community of cultural critics and social activists.



## Discourse and difference in an academic community: an examination of how adult educators talk to one another

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### Abstract

In this paper we combine sociological autobiography with an analytical framework taken from the work of such writers as Michel Foucault in order to analyse the socio-cultural practices of study leave and conferences amongst the academic community of adult educators.

### Background history

This paper developed out of a shared experience of study leave in 1992. We are both British academics working in the field of adult education, and before this experience we were distantly familiar with each other's work and had met at several adult education conferences. During 1992 we were both invited to visit the University of Technology, Sydney (UTS), to carry out teaching and research in the Faculty of Education. For four months, we shared an office and acted as important reference points for one another, analysing together the events which variously stimulated, puzzled, distressed and delighted us and which made up our study leave experience.

To a large extent, we were strangers to one another before the shared study leave experience, despite the fact that we shared a professional network; the adult education world in the UK is a small one. We had both contributed chapters to a book edited by Professor Dave Boud (Boud, Cohen and Walker, 1993), and it was Dave who had invited both of us, separately, to visit the UTS School of Adult and Language Education, of which he is Head.

While we share an interest in the use of experience as the basis of learning, our perspectives and styles are markedly different. Nod's concerns include media sociology, experiential groupwork and feminist autobiography (see Miller, 1992), while Robin focuses particularly on the application of the ideas of postmodernist and poststructuralist writers to the theory and practice of adult education (see Usher and Bryant, 1989; Usher, 1992).

The discussion which led us to conceive of this paper began shortly after Robin's arrival in Sydney, and followed a staff seminar which Nod conducted in the School of Adult and Language Education. The theme of the seminar was research as autobiography (and autobiography as research), and her attempts to stimulate a discussion of the relationship between research and personal experience, and to draw out autobiographical stories from those present, had met with limited success. The reaction of most of the Australian colleagues present was one of mild (but tolerant) puzzlement, and Robin's immediate reaction after the seminar was to seek out Nod to ask "do you feel sometimes that being here is a bit like being an exotic species on show in a zoo?" We went on to discuss the strong sense of otherness which separated the two of us as visitors from our colleagues as hosts, and, conversely, the sense of shared identity which drew the pair of us together. The effect of study leave in constructing visitors and hosts as exotic to one another is a central theme of this paper.

### Aims of this paper and key terms

We see adult educators as constituting an academic community, although we make no assumptions about its cohesiveness and degree of organisation. In this paper we examine certain communicative practices which are both community-creating and community-maintaining. The practices we have chosen are those of study leave and conferences, which are important means by which members of the adult education community talk to one another.

We employ a theoretical framework derived from the work of such writers as Foucault in order to reflect upon and analyse some familiar practices within the academic community of which we are a part. We use 'text' and 'discourse' as our explanatory concepts. The former refers not only to written texts but more broadly to any social practice or cultural entity which, because it is an ordered arrangement, a structure of signs and meanings, is both constructed and always open to interpretation. In this sense, a social practice is not unlike a written text, in that it can be read and interpreted in many different ways. The notion of 'text' draws attention to the fact that everything we understand about the world is, by virtue of that understanding, part of a discursive structure or system of signification through which it is endowed with meaning.

Discourse can mean speech or language generally, the structure of signs and meanings, the nonpersonal, intersubjective field of language which exists beyond individuals and into which individual speakers are incorporated. Discourse also refers to the variety of specific social and historical forms which language takes and which determines the rules about what can be said and not said in a particular cultural context. Foucault (1977) defines discourse in this sense as "practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak and in doing so conceal their own

invention" (p. 49). Finally, 'discourse' can refer to a disciplinary matrix — a systematic, knowledge-based way of seeing, thinking and speaking. Foucault (1980) talks of discourse in this sense as a power/knowledge formation on the basis that all forms of power are imbued with knowledge and forms of knowledge are permeated by power relations.

Texts and discourses are related because the former are the means by which power/knowledge formations are relayed and disseminated. More specifically, texts both in the wider sense of social practices and in the narrower sense of written documents are the means by which power/knowledge formations are presented and reproduced.

### **Socio-cultural practices as texts**

Study leave (which we define as visiting an institution which is not one's own for the purposes of research and scholarship) and conferences are common phenomena in the life of any academic community. They are examples of socio-cultural practices which function both to create and to maintain the community and constitute sites where discourses and meanings circulate. To put it another way, they are 'texts', or organised networks of meaning, through which members of the academic community are constructed in particular ways. Construction is a signifying process whereby meaning is conferred and hence whereby members are positioned in relation to one another.

These practices are always open to interpretation both from inside and from outside. Those who participate in them are identified and positioned through dominant significations, yet the meanings can be 're-read'. Being always open to interpretation they can never be final and definitive. In studying these practices as texts, we can go beyond the obvious meaning presented and re-read them from the viewpoint of context (socio-historical location), pre-text (language and discourses) and sub-text (power relations).

### **Self-reflexivity through autobiography**

In the course of preparing this paper, we have engaged in systematic reflection on and analysis of our own personal experience and have hence been involved in a form of sociological autobiography (see Merton, 1988). A growing interest in autobiography and life history has recently become apparent amongst social scientists and educators (see, for example, Armstrong, 1987; Stanley 1992). As Stanley and Morgan (1993) point out in their introduction to a collection of papers on auto/biography in sociology, this interest reflects current theoretical and epistemological concerns within sociology, including a preoccupation with the construction of selves, and an increased awareness of the way in which academic researchers work actively to produce social scientific knowledge rather than 'discovering' social facts. The concern with the researcher's personal experience can also be seen as a return to longer-standing concerns in sociology with self-reflexivity and to established definitions of the social scientific enterprise; C. Wright Mills, for example, argues that "as a social scientist, you have to ... capture what you experience and sort it out" (Mills, 1970, p. 216), and asserts that "the sociological imagination enables us to grasp history and biography and the relations between the two within society" (*ibid.*, p. 12).

### **Study leave**

In the case of study leave which involves an academic visiting an institution which is not her or his own, a primary concern for the host is absorption of the stranger. It appears to be an unwritten rule that the visitor must be made welcome and provided with a certain level of support. Thus the problem for the host institution is how to absorb the stranger who has appeared in its midst in such a way as, on the one hand, not to break the unwritten rule whilst, on the other, to ensure that her or his presence does not disrupt the workings of the institution, and in particular its system of internal meanings and power relations.

A common experience on which we both remarked during our shared study leave involved being invited by Australian colleagues to meetings at which the intention seemed to be to exchange experience about, for example, approaches to teaching, institutional pressures, changing cultures within higher education or problems of obtaining funds for research, but where the meeting was abruptly terminated when we reached a point when we started to talk about aspects of our back-home experience or identity. We concluded that this was not because colleagues were excessively egocentric or uninterested in our concerns; however, if we talked about a real, populated, parallel world elsewhere then we became much more complex entities, to be dealt with in a different way.

Of course, the problem of how to absorb strangers is not unique to study leave in academic communities. It is one which members of any community ('insiders') face in dealing with 'outsiders'. The problem is essentially one of how to make the stranger familiar, so that the threat and uncertainty posed by the stranger can be minimised and coped with. Making familiar involves, firstly, the creation of an identity whereby the stranger is given a meaning and thus rendered understandable, and secondly the positioning of the stranger within the host institution and in relation to the positional network of its members. By being given a meaning and a position the stranger can be absorbed without disruption to the host institution.

Derrida (1982) has pointed out that at the heart of identity lies difference — what something is depends on what it is not. The familiarisation of the stranger through the attribution of identity must depend on a process which

constructs the stranger not only as different, but also in terms of a particular kind of difference. To construct the stranger as different is to characterise her or him as 'other', as someone positioned outside the institutional system of 'normality'. Our experience suggests that in the case of study leave, the particular way in which the visitor is constructed is as an 'exotic other'.

One illustration of this construction may be found in the fact that, in our host faculty in Sydney, we were continually referred to as 'the visiting Poms'. As we saw ourselves as having quite distinct and separate identities from one another, to be referred to as a single item in this way was, to begin with, decidedly disconcerting, even though the label was usually applied in tones which carried connotations of affection rather than of hostility. Eventually we became accustomed to the fact that each of us was expected to be fully cognisant of the other's movements and preferences, and resigned ourselves to being classified first and foremost as foreigners, and secondly as almost interchangeable. Indeed it was this treatment which formed the basis for much of our reflective analysis of our experience on study leave and which helped to cement the relationship between us.

Woolgar (1991) points out that in anthropological and ethnographic investigation the researched are assumed to be fundamentally different from or other to the researchers, with their beliefs, attitudes and patterns of behaviour explicable as products of an exotic culture. This positing of radical difference is a way of guaranteeing the certainty of research outcomes through privileging the methods and accounts of researchers. If researchers did not assume this difference then no privilege could be accorded to 'scientific' research methods — in other words, what the researchers were doing would be seen as equally exotic and equally in need of explanation.

The construction of the exotic other is a way of minimising uncertainty. There is obviously a paradox here. On the one hand, if we see people as essentially similar to ourselves, then the more uncertain we are about their identity and positioning and hence how to interact with them. On the other hand, the more people are constituted as radically different and therefore more readily classifiable, the more they can be made familiar. What this means is that similarity and difference are constructions, achievements of a social practice, which are effective precisely because they do not appear to be constructed. Thus others are signified as exotic on the basis of their supposedly 'natural' qualities — in other words, it is not that they have been made exotic, they really *are* exotic.

Woolgar goes on to argue that exoticism and the minimisation of uncertainty are not confined to ethnographic research but are "crucial to a wide range of representational practices" (p. 28). Study leave is also a representational practice in the sense that the visitor is represented and re-presented. By being given the identity of an exotic other, the visitor is familiarised and positioned within the institutional structure and its signification system. In being seen in this way the visitor is recognised as interesting but harmless, not a feared and threatening other to be rejected or defended against but as a kind of curiosity whose place is that of the marginal insider.

Derrida argues, however, that any attempt to fix meaning definitively is always undermined. Meaning is always 'slipping' and subject to play. He uses the notion of 'différance' to suggest both difference and deferral. There is a sense in which in study leave attempts to fix meaning through the creation of an identity for the visitor can be seen as subject to 'différance'. The construction of difference in terms of the exotic other cannot therefore be made to stick; the other cannot be totalised and classified in this way. Identity and positioning are achieved through difference but are also continually deferred. In study leave, nobody really knows who you are.

At the same time, the exotic other (the visitor) is trying to make the host institution meaningful and may well construct those encountered in it as exotic others. For example, we were consistently struck by what in some senses are minor differences between Australian and British people manifested in everyday social interaction. Australians really do say 'G'day' frequently, and the standard response to the question 'G'day, how're y'goin'?' is 'Good'. Such a response is extremely difficult for a British person, brought up to think of 'can't complain' or 'fair to middling' as the sort of response indicating extreme satisfaction with the state of the universe, to deliver with conviction. This routine monosyllable, 'good', was enough of a basis for us to begin to construct our Australian colleagues as beings almost as different as if they hailed from another planet. We dwelt much more on this difference of ritual behaviour than we did on considering the fact that booklists issued on courses in Sydney often closely resembled those being issued 12,000 miles away in Manchester or Southampton.

One Australian colleague, whose texts on psychology and adult education grace many a booklist in Sydney, Southampton and, probably, Syracuse, took the pair of us on a tour of the sights of Sydney. As the three of us sat watching the roller-bladers cruising the Corso by Manly Beach, he reminisced about his adolescence spent as a surfer. As the years rolled back, and we contemplated the contrast between the golden beaches of Sydney's North Shore and the view on wet afternoons from bus shelters in British seaside resorts such as Skegness or Scarborough, a gulf opened up between his past history and ours which once again served to reinforce our own constructions of exoticism and foreign-ness.

The visitor may see herself or himself as an anthropologist in the midst of an alien and exotic culture. But this too is an attributed identity which is constructed through difference but subject to deferral. Since both parties are mutually constructing their counterparts as exotic others, it is clear that an interactive self-other spiral, a hall of mirrors, is being triggered which makes the host-visitor relationship tense and often uneasy.



## Conferences

The academic conference may be viewed as a text 'written' in a realist genre, where a text refers to or represents worlds outside itself but does not draw attention to its textuality. In this realist genre, a text derives its meaning from the worlds to which it refers or which it represents. The conference purports to be about the "real world" that lies outside the conference and its own processes are rendered invisible.

During the course of our academic careers, our experience of conferences has included a conference on experiential learning where communication during formal sessions was confined to the one-way transmission of information from the platform; a conference on the use of games and simulations in education where not a single game was played; a sociology conference on social stratification and inequality where the relationship between the middle-class conference delegates and the working-class catering staff who serviced the conference was studiously ignored; and several conferences on adult education where every rule of good andragogical practice was systematically broken.

Nod has spent much of the last ten years engaged in a series of experiments with conference design (described in Miller, 1991). The intention of these experiments has been to promote change within the academic communities represented in various conferences, and to raise questions about the way in which members of such communities communicate with one another by subverting some of the rules which appear to govern communication within academic communities. If these rules, and the values which they embody, are to be challenged, they must first be made explicit.

Some of these experiments have involved the organisation of experiential workshops in the context of conferences where the usual practice is for presenters to read formal papers. Others have involved the creation of devices designed to encourage reflection on the conference process itself. These devices have included satirical cabaret events, where comments on the structure of and interaction within the academic community and the conference itself can be made in a way which may be better received than, say, a critique mounted during an AGM. A conference newspaper is another device which may be used to expose and comment upon taken-for-granted aspects of conference organisation and interaction.

Roger Boshier's catalogue of AERC history, performed at breakneck speed over dinner at the 1992 Conference, constituted a text reflecting on the processes and practices of the academic community represented in the AERC. It provided a commentary on conference process, as well as an account of the historical development of the AERC, and hence brought a dimension to the conference which was generally missing from the formal proceedings. At the 1986 AERC the British participants organised an awards ceremony during the Conference cabaret where noteworthy contributions to the event (such as Most Creative Use of the Microphone in a Plenary Session, Most Jargon-Laden Paper and Most Famous Non-Presenter) were celebrated. Both of these interventions in a sense subverted the dominant discourse of the Conference and served to draw attention, albeit in a light-hearted way, to hierarchies and power relations within the academic community represented in the event.

The academic conference is a space where the discourses of the community are articulated, reproduced and confirmed and where identity and difference are created, where some are authorised to speak and others silenced. For example, the AERC has clearly established gatekeeping practices whereby some individuals are given space to present their ideas while others are excluded. The Call for Papers for the Conference contains a wealth of assumptions about the nature of research in adult education and hence represents a powerful set of criteria for inclusion and exclusion.

Although the 'real world' plays its part as a pre-text, conferences are self-enclosed and self-referencing texts. This perhaps accounts for the way in which participants often find themselves experiencing conferences as compressed versions of reality, so that time is distorted, two days in the conference environment seem like weeks in the outside world, and an excursion outside the conference centre results in a heightened experience of reality, akin to one of Umberto Eco's 'travels in hyper-reality' (Eco, 1986).

Contrary to what is usually supposed by their organisers, academic conferences are not *about* anything outside themselves; their meaning is not to be found in their representing an outside reality because they are themselves their own meaning, and everyone who participates in them takes away a different meaning. The meaning of a conference is to be found in itself, the experiences of which it consists and the way these are read, in its circulation of discourses and in its own interactive dynamics. If the conference is a space for learning, and we believe that it is, then it is here that the opportunities for learning are to be found.

## Conclusion

Academic communities have sometimes displayed a tendency to ignore their own structures and processes. They have concerned themselves with researching the behaviour of groups outside themselves, but have been less ready to see themselves as problematic or legitimate objects of research.



Adult educators have not escaped this failure of reflexivity. This is particularly ironic given that the aim of the adult education community is the promotion of adult learning, the privileged object of the community's predominant discourse. A great deal of its research effort is directed towards finding out about the learning of others. Less attention has been given to the investigation of its own practice as a community; to how members learn to become members and to the way in which their learning is structured by phenomena such as study leave and conferences. In this way opportunities for learning and for learning about learning have been lost.

In this paper we have tried to show how concepts such as 'text' and 'discourse' and the theories of language and power which underlie them constitute important critical resources in providing an alternative perspective and understanding. With these resources, adult educators can re-read their practices and recognise the constructed and constructing nature of what they do. There is an increasing range of examples of this form of analysis; Stephen Ball's (1990) use of a framework drawn from Foucault to interrogate the discourse of management in British education and to identify such practices as staff appraisal as surveillance devices, and Metcalfe's (1992) analysis of the growth in importance in academic life of the CV (see also Miller and Morgan, 1993), are good examples of social scientists turning their attention to social practices in communities to which they belong. If adult educators became more reflexive about their own learning and developed the practice of autobiographical research, perhaps their effectiveness in facilitating the learning of others might be enhanced.

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## WORKERS EDUCATION: CONCEPTUAL AND PRACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADULT EDUCATORS

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### Abstract

This paper describes two research studies that show how adult educators can develop links with, and support workers' educational initiatives, and in so doing, expand the knowledge base of the adult education field.

There have been calls at recent North American adult education gatherings for a strengthening of the links between educational researchers and worker activists, and the reintroduction of workers' education to North American adult education discourse. Unlike British and other European adult education movements, modern adult education in the United States and (to a lesser extent) Canada has largely ignored and been separate from workers' education. The published literature has focused on the historical development of both adult and workers' educational institutions and their movement away from social transformation toward more functionalist and technocratic purposes. However, more recently, adult educators have begun to identify the potential of the workplace as a site of educational as well as economic struggle (Candy and Crebert, 1991; Hart, 1992; Simon et al, 1990) and to recognize the benefits in closer cooperation with worker educators (Kumar, 1990; Mantsios, 1990).

This paper describes two research studies that challenge commonly held assumptions about workplace education, the production of knowledge, and the relationships between work, learning and experience--all crucial issues for adult educators. Most importantly, they force adult educators to face the question "Education for whom and to what end?" By taking the opportunities that workers' education presents, adult educators can develop their understanding of workers' educational issues and extend and deepen the relationships between the two fields.

### San Francisco City College Labor Studies Program

During 1990 and 1991, adult education researchers conducted a formative participatory evaluation of the Labor Studies Program of San Francisco City College. The main purpose of the evaluation was to help the Program's coordinator, staff, students, and advisory committee in their ongoing efforts to meet both the educative needs of individual students and those of the wider labor community in the San Francisco Bay area.

Preliminary research showed that published evaluations of Labor Studies programs were limited in scope and methodology. Educational evaluation models are often inappropriate for considering the aims, content, and

processes of part-time programs for working adults, and particularly for those for members of labor unions who already have experience of participatory democracy and accountability. The inappropriateness of many evaluation models can be due to a reluctance within adult education discourse to adequately consider and value working-class experience and culture. Working people are often viewed either as individuals, somehow worse off than others, or as "economic and occupational groups, positioned by their rank in a static social hierarchy" (Hellyer and Schulman, p.570).

These views can have far-reaching implications for evaluators of workers' education programs. Many workers have unpleasant memories of their own schooling and negative attitudes towards education in general. Evaluation (as assessment) has often been the tool used to separate working-class youth from access to continuing education. Additionally, the test of success in workers' education is not solely what the student has learned, or even what changes have occurred in attitude. Rather it is what actions have resulted from the educational experience. Workers' education is not merely concerned with cataloging or describing the experiences of working people but also offers a critique of, and presents alternatives to the present system. Hence, a function of a properly planned evaluation should be the provision of opportunities to engage in systematic critical reflection and analysis. Finally, evaluations of workers' education programs should draw on and emphasize collective experiences and accountability as well as promote those ideas and values that the labor movement espouses. In particular, they should promote programs and encourage the development of policies and practices that encourage greater social justice and concepts of community, collective self-reliance, and a notion of individuals not as passive objects but as active agents.

It was within this framework that the researchers designed a participatory evaluation process, drawing heavily on the learners' own views and understandings about the San Francisco Program. Early research showed that the two areas of greatest concern were course content and teaching methodologies, and an extensive observation and interview schedule was designed to survey each of the 11 semester length courses being held during the Spring 1991 semester and a representative sample of learners from each course. In addition, all instructors and advisory board members were interviewed to determine their attitudes and beliefs about specific courses, the Program in general, and the overall contexts of the Bay Area labor movement and economic systems.

Most of the evaluation findings referred specifically to the Program or individual courses and these were used as the basis of a series of ongoing staff development and training sessions for the Program's faculty. Experienced instructors did not always take kindly to outsiders or students commenting sometimes unfavorably, on their work. However, the participatory structure of the evaluation process allowed all those associated with the Program many opportunities to recognize and deal with the other differing views. It also brought out the political dimensions of evaluation by identifying the differing amounts of power held by different groups. As each group became

more aware of and confronted the differences in power and the areas of disagreement between them, the evaluation process became deeper and richer. This process approached a practical application of what Guba and Lincoln (1989) describe as "fourth generation evaluation" where the claims, concerns, and issues of stakeholders are not merely taken into account but provide the organizational focus for the evaluation. This extends the idea of program evaluation--stakeholders participate in an evaluation study as analysts, critics, judges, and evaluators, rather than merely as providers of data. This evaluation approach also challenges the notion of evaluation as a predominantly managerial ideology. By taking account of differing and competing values the "scientific" and behaviorist paradigm of earlier evaluation methodologies are questioned. It challenges many conventional methodological assumptions and practices (e.g., that knowledge cannot be "discovered" only "verified," that contextual factors are either ignored or controlled, or that evaluation is a value-free process).

The evaluation highlighted concern over the teaching methodologies used in the Program. Participants determined a need to move towards "teaching the students, rather than teaching the subject." Two ways identified to do this were to develop participatory learning methods and to encourage critical thinking.

Participatory learning: Labor unionism is taught through process as much as through formal content. To reflect union values in teaching is to teach collectively and democratically and to encourage participation. Such teaching rejects "banking" education where one person with greater power determines what "knowledge" to dispense to others. As one instructor put it, "Students already have experiences of working together with others in their union [which form] the basis for the content of the courses... but the methods we use should reflect this as well." Emphasizing a collaborative rather than an individual approach to learning provides valuable opportunities for students to learn from each other as well as gain more confidence and autonomy. Working class learners often view education and knowledge as somehow contained "out there" in books, courses or instructors, and believe that learning from their own experiences is somehow less important--a view often abetted by traditional educational practices. "School often teaches us to answer the questions nobody is asking" as one learner claimed. Indeed, working class people often distinguish between academic or "book" knowledge and practical learning "by the seat of your pants" or "on the job." Courses in workers' education programs can challenge the notion that education has to be separate from their "real world."

Critical thinking: Activity comes easily to working people; their lives are filled with it. To survive they must work and be active. They value what people do, as much as what they think. Reflection on that activity is harder; it takes time and a place that working people don't often have access to. Critical thinking--becoming aware, through reflection, of one's underlying assumptions about the world--is harder still. However, by undertaking the deliberate process of analyzing their involvement in their workplaces and



communities, working people can understand and begin to transform the forces that determine their lives. Reflection on action by workers can mean learning to see themselves as social and political beings, capable of effecting change. Relating past experiences to current learning contributes to an active search for meaning and sharing with other learners. In this way, learners can be encouraged to see their course participation as more than a search for individual and external truths. However, it is not common for working-class learners to view collective learning positively--in school it is usually regarded as cheating. Instructors can help learners by drawing analogies with other collective endeavors such as their regular union activities. Finally, critical thinking requires more than an exposure to a variety of interesting and sometimes contrasting views. It provides challenging opportunities for learners to develop their individual and collective voices--a recognition of what they share with others in their class, their workplaces, and their communities.

#### Health Care Skill Builders Program

The Health Care Skill Builders Program was a project of the Northern California Joint Council of Service Employees #2 in partnership with Merritt College in Oakland, CA. During 1991 and 1992 the Program offered on-the-job literacy and basic skills classes to health care workers at three local hospitals. The ten courses offered focused on the skills identified by workers as necessary for improved job performance and career mobility in the health care field. The Program deliberately sought to base its curriculum around the needs of the workers and their unions rather than, as is usual with workplace literacy programs, simply train workers to respond to employers' needs. It supported this curriculum with a comprehensive framework of educational and social support services. The Program showed how the involvement of adult educators with workers and their union representatives helped the development of a workplace-based literacy program that situated individual goals of social and economic mobility within a larger community context.

What distinguished the Program from other, more traditional workplace literacy programs was (a) the direct involvement of workers and their unions in planning, supporting, and evaluating the Program, and (b) the dominant teaching model, based on a deliberate integration of social support and instruction. Although many unions cooperate in joint workplace literacy programs with educational and business institutions, in general labor allows the business community to define both the terms and content of workers' education programs. Workplace literacy programs are predominantly oriented towards workers as individuals and generally use a pre-packaged and decontextualized curriculum. In only rare instances (Collins, 1990; Soifer et al, 1989; Stansbury, 1989) have adult educators helped workers and their unions design alternative models that emphasize and build upon the needs of workers rather than train workers to respond to employers' needs. Each Health Care Skill Builders class used a teaching team consisting of an Instructor, an educational Counselor, and a peer Learning Advocate. This

team worked collaboratively to use their combined skills and knowledge to draw upon the knowledge and existing network of support within the union; overcome barriers to participation and learning; create a cooperative, "worker-centered" learning environment; and keep the instructional material relevant to the students and their work and community settings. Learning Advocates were key to the Program. Drawn from the ranks of union activists in the workplace, and trained in outreach, counseling, and facilitation skills, Learning Advocates were trusted peers who acted as resources for work and community-related needs and issues. They helped the instructors shape the curriculum, informed others of particular events or trends at work, recruited fellow workers into the Program, addressed work/Union issues that arose in class, and modeled participation and direction.

Counselors, all trained professionals, provided a range of support services, participated in classroom activities, and worked closely with the Learning Advocates to identify and overcome learners' barriers to participation and learning. As part of the teaching teams, Counselors could initiate or facilitate discussions on issues (such as work conflicts, self-esteem, or family issues) that affect learning or participation. Counselors also provided information and referral to learners on vocational and community resources and facilitated access to childcare and transportation resources. Most importantly, Counselors had regular contact with all the learners, and could be seen working closely with the Learning Advocates. In this way they could remove the fear and stigma of professional counseling that so many working people face.

The Instructors were all experienced adult education and college teachers, specially chosen for their sensitivity to work and worker-related issues. Through collaboration with the learners and other members of the teaching teams, Instructors determined the skills and content of each class and integrated them with the specific needs of the learners and their workplaces. By developing interpretive understandings of the values and uses of literacy in the learner's lives, Instructors were able to customize teaching units and materials to reflect input from a variety of perspectives. In this Program, the Instructors were required to step outside of the "traditional" teacher role, and develop curriculum and conduct their classes in collaboration with the other members of the teaching team. Given the prior experience and training of most college instructors, relinquishing this control could be challenging. However, the Instructors benefited by not being expected to gather all the necessary information and materials from the workplace. Further, the Learning Advocates and the Counselors could provide the support and advocacy to learners that most adult educators feel they must furnish in addition to their teaching.

Whatever their role, all the team members participated with learners in developing the Program. Working together as a team required flexibility and a willingness to move beyond traditional and safe roles. Through discussions, role plays, and evaluation of the problems encountered, team members

deepened their understanding of collaborative approaches. Putting theory into practice presented many challenges: collaborative curriculum design and instruction, sharing information to provide effective social support, allowing other to take a role in determining the direction of the class, and cooperative decision-making all required practice and a willingness to explore new ways of teaching and learning. Most importantly, the Project emphasized how workplace education is a value-laden and political process in which workers can contribute to produce knowledge.

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EFFECTS OF AGE COMPOSITION ON ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT  
IN COLLEGE CLASSROOMS

Richard J. Novak

The research explores the effects of age composition on academic achievement in college classrooms. The presence of adults influences expectations for normative behaviors with respect to the role of student and thus affects the classroom social climate and academic performance.



The research extends a line of inquiry that explores the effects of age composition on academic achievement in the college classroom. It was posited that the social role and associated normative and behavioral differences between adults and pre-adults have a significant effect in the classroom. The proportion of adults has an effect on the expectations for normative behaviors in the college classroom with respect to the role of student. These expectations and resultant normative behaviors affect the classroom social climate and academic performance. This performance can be measured as academic achievement in terms of course grade.

Studies on the impact of age composition on the process and outcomes of learning in the classroom have reported provocative results. Elder (1967) found cross-age relations in the classroom to have positive effects in interpersonal, academic, and vocational domains. A recent study reported at AERC (Darkenwald, Bowman, and Novak, 1991) on the impact of age composition on outcomes of learning in the classroom was the first to follow-up Elder. That study, conducted at a community college, found that the average grade for all students, irrespective of the individual student's chronological age, was a full grade higher in predominantly adult classes than in predominantly pre-adult classes.

A review of the research pertaining to the presence of adults in the college classroom shows that age composition can influence perceptions of the learning environment and academic achievement. It also shows that the presence of adults in the classroom reinforces adult norms within the classroom. The theoretical framework for this understanding is found in role and socialization theory. Role theory suggests that overt or covert prescriptions reinforce or discourage certain behavior. Brim (1966) explains that it is through interaction with others and their normative beliefs that an individual learns appropriate behavior. Behavior in the classroom is influenced by cues of approval or disapproval and the creation of an environment which perpetuates and reinforces a particular culture. The culture that is promoted by the presence of adults, influenced by adult norms, is one that facilitates learning and achievement. Thus, it was expected that mixed age classes with the highest proportion of adults would exhibit the highest level of academic achievement.

#### HYPOTHESIS

The purpose of the research was to determine the effects of college classroom age composition on aggregate classroom achievement. It was hypothesized that aggregate student achievement in college classes is a positive linear function of higher class enrollments by adults.

#### SAMPLE AND SAMPLING METHOD

The research was designed to yield a large, representative sample of classes of both pre-adult and adult learners. The classes employed in this study were selected from the undergraduate evening courses at a major research university in the Northeast.

Eighty-four classes, representing 2175 students, were selected from a Spring and Fall 1990 evening class listing, generated by the unit's administration, that contained a count of students by age. Both pre-adult and

adult undergraduate students were found in these classes. Class size was normally distributed and ranged from 11 to 40 students, with an average of 26. The demographic data revealed that 61 percent of the 2175 students were pre-adults, younger than age 24, and 39 percent were adults, age 24 or older. Forty-six percent ( $n=1007$ ) of the students were male and 54 percent ( $n=1165$ ) were female. All information to categorize classes was taken from counts on Spring and Fall 1990 class listings and the registrar's grade reports for each class. Demographic and grade data was collected for each class. Aggregate data were then configured for each class and the class was employed as the unit of analysis for the study.

Classes were categorized by the percentage of adults in the class and by subject matter. The adult composition of each class was computed and the classes categorized according to the definitions employed in this study. Classes with over 50 percent adult registration were labelled predominantly adult classes. Classes with 25-50 percent adult registration were termed mixed-age classes. Classes with less than 25 percent adult registration were considered pre-adult classes.

### FINDINGS

Classroom age composition, trichotomized into predominantly pre-adult, mixed, and predominantly adult, according to the definitions employed in this study and labeled ADULTNESS, was found to have a significant effect on academic achievement, as measured by end of course grade. ADULTNESS was also found to be significantly correlated with course type. Course type, abbreviated CORMATH, was a dichotomous variable that categorized courses as math courses or all other courses based on subject matter.

Average course grades were found to increase with an increase in adult composition of the classes. However, math courses with over 50 percent adult enrollment did not adhere to this hypothesized pattern.

In order to test the hypothesis, it was necessary to rule out the possibility of a direct relationship between chronological age and course grade. The Pearson  $r$  correlation coefficient for chronological age and course grade for individual students was .0541. While statistically significant because of the large sample size, the correlation was theoretically meaningless as it revealed that chronological age explained approximately one quarter of 1 percent of the variance in course grade. This, then, provided evidence for ruling out a direct relationship between individual chronological age and individual course grade.

As a test to rule out the competing hypothesis that chronological age and grade performance were related at the class level, an ANOVA was conducted for average course grade and average age. Table 1 reports the findings from this analysis, revealing a statistically insignificant relationship between average grade and average age. Average age is an aggregate mean of individual students' chronological age. As such, significance in this finding would have lent support to an alternative hypothesis that suggested that course grade is significantly affected by individual chronological age. The lack of significance in Table 1 further supports the research hypothesis in looking for

class composition effects at the class level of analysis, rather than at the individual level of analysis.

Table 1  
ANOVA Summary: Average Grade by Average Age

| Source of Variation | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F     | p    |
|---------------------|----------------|----|-------------|-------|------|
| Average Age         | 4.182          | 14 | .299        | 1.029 | .436 |
| Explained           | 4.182          | 14 | .299        | 1.029 | .436 |
| Residual            | 20.030         | 69 | .290        |       |      |
| Total               | 24.212         | 83 | .292        |       |      |

Preliminary data analyses, such as means and standard deviations of course grades, indicated a positive linear relationship between adult age composition and average class achievement in humanities and social science courses. However, a contrary trend was found with respect to math courses, which comprised 20 out of 84 sample classes. Consequently, to test the hypothesis that the proportion of adults in a given class has a positive linear relationship to achievement, it was necessary to partial out the effects of course type. The results of this analysis are shown below in Tables 2 and 3.

Table 2 shows the results of an oneway analysis of variance (ANOVA) conducted for classroom age composition (ADULTNESS) and student course grade (GRADE) for all courses other than math. This was done to determine the impact of the adult class composition on the student's grade. The significance level of .006 indicates the significant effect of classroom age composition, ADULTNESS, on student grade, for all non-math courses. Scheffe tests indicated significant differences among the three age composition groups at the .05 confidence level.

Table 2  
Oneway ANOVA Summary: Grade by Class Age Composition for All Non-Math Courses

| Source of Variation | Sum of Squares | df   | Mean Square | F     | p    |
|---------------------|----------------|------|-------------|-------|------|
| Between Groups      | 9.812          | 2    | 4.906       | 5.201 | .006 |
| Within Groups       | 1339.484       | 1420 | .943        |       |      |
| Total               | 1349.296       | 1422 |             |       |      |

A similar analysis was conducted for math courses only. The results of the oneway analysis of variance (ANOVA) conducted for classroom age composition (ADULTNESS) and student course grade (GRADE) for math courses is presented in Table 3. The significance level of .001 indicates the significant effect of classroom age composition, ADULTNESS, on student grade, for all math courses.

Table 3

Oneway ANOVA Summary: Grade by Class Age Composition for All Math Courses

| Source of Variation | Sum of Squares | df  | Mean Square | F      | p    |
|---------------------|----------------|-----|-------------|--------|------|
| Between Groups      | 33.922         | 2   | 16.961      | 10.434 | .001 |
| Within Groups       | 832.304        | 512 | 1.626       |        |      |
| Total               | 866.226        | 514 |             |        |      |

Analysis of covariance was conducted with the class age composition and consideration of subject matter. ADULTNESS, the class age composition category of the class, and CORMATH, course type -- math or all other courses -- were found to have a statistically significant direct effect on student grade as seen in Table 4.

Aggregate average course grades and standard deviations were computed, partitioned out by subject matter and class age composition categories. The ANOVA revealed a significant effect on course grade by the adult composition of the class when course type was considered. The analysis of aggregate average course grades was conducted to help interpret these findings. Given the significance of course type, aggregate average course grades were also analyzed according to various subject matter configurations.

When math courses were considered apart from all other courses, a linear increase was found in the average course grade as the adult composition of the class increased with one exception. Predominantly adult math courses did not conform to this pattern.

Table 4

Analysis of Covariance Summary: Grade by Class Age Composition with Course Type (Math and All Other Courses)

| Source of Variation   | Sum of Squares | df   | Mean Square | F       | p    |
|-----------------------|----------------|------|-------------|---------|------|
| Covariate: CORMATH    | 168.456        | 1    | 168.456     | 147.527 | .001 |
| Main Effect:ADULTNESS | 7.160          | 2    | 3.580       | 3.135   | .044 |
| Explained             | 175.616        | 3    | 58.539      | 51.266  | .001 |
| Residual              | 2208.363       | 1934 | 1.142       |         |      |
| Total                 | 2383.978       | 1937 | 1.231       |         |      |

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The primary purpose of the research was to test the hypothesis that aggregated average course grade was a linear function of the proportion of adults in the class. Course grade was found to be independent of chronological age, at both the individual and class level of analysis. Average course grades were found to increase with an increase in adult composition of the classes. However, math courses with over 50 percent adult enrollment did not adhere to this hypothesized pattern. Secondary analyses revealed that the predominantly



adult math courses were populated by a number of women (n=19), age 40 and over, who earned average grades of under a D+. This helped to explain the reason for the primary finding.

Other gender and age differences were found during secondary analyses. Overall average grades for women were found to be higher than grades for men. The average grade for females was lower than for males, in math and to a lesser extent in the natural sciences, except when the classes had less than 25 percent adult enrollment. When both age and gender were considered, women age 30 - 40 achieved the highest grades of any gender/age category in humanities and social science courses. This notable achievement held true even when the subject matter included all courses except math.

### CONCLUSIONS

This study is important in highlighting once again the potent effects within a class due to social environment interactions. Average course grades were found to increase with an increase in adult composition of the classes, with minor exceptions. Achievement, as measured by course grade, was found to be independent of chronological age, at the individual and class level of analysis. Further analyses revealed strong gender effects mediated by subject matter.

The presence of adults affect expectations for normative behaviors in the college classroom with respect to the role of student. These expectations and resultant normative behaviors affect the classroom social climate and academic performance.

### DISCUSSION

The results of this study suggest that role theory and the influence of adult norms are both plausible and potent for explaining an increase in aggregate student achievement in college classes as a function of higher class enrollments by adults. The study suggests that the greater the adult composition of the class, the more influential the adult norms will be in that class. Many of these adult norms, such as active participation, academic honesty, and task completion, are salutary for academic achievement. Evidence also exists for consideration of subject matter as a factor affecting the potency of the adult composition of the class. Moreover, the results of the present study have important implications for adult education practitioners and researchers. There are also important policy considerations, especially for administrators of adult undergraduate degree units.

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## Cognitive Strategies and the Use of Prior Knowledge in Learning

Christine H. Olgren

**ABSTRACT:** This study investigated adults' cognitive processes in learning from text and factors influencing cognition. Identified were three groups of learners who differed in cognitive strategies, motivation, and use of prior domain knowledge.

### PURPOSE

The study's purpose was to investigate how adults used cognitive learning strategies to select, organize, and integrate text-based material in an independent study course. The study also explored how qualitative differences in strategies were related to learners' goals and prior knowledge of the subject. (The findings reported here come from a broader study of cognitive strategies in relation to goals, perceptions, and outcomes; Olgren, 1992).

Independent study using print materials mailed to learners is the oldest and most common form of distance education, where adults are able to learn at home rather than attend classroom courses. In the United States an estimated 250,000 students enroll annually in independent study programs in higher education, and the number approaches four million if the military, proprietary schools, and churches are included (Feasley, Kreiger, & Markowitz, 1986). Educators, however, have little research to draw upon to understand how adults learn from text. Few studies in either adult education or distance education have examined cognitive learning processes or how adults' prior knowledge affects cognition (Merriam, 1987; Caffarella, Loehr, & Hosick, 1989; Hayes, 1990; Cookson, 1989).

### PERSPECTIVE

The study's conceptual framework drew from learning strategy research in cognitive psychology, which focuses on how people mentally process information and construct knowledge in memory. Learning strategies are defined as thoughts and behaviors that are intended to influence how a person learns, thinks, and motivates self in order to carry out a learning task (Weinstein & Mayer, 1986). Studies indicate that capable learners use various cognitive strategies to select, organize, and integrate information as well as metacognitive strategies to plan and regulate learning. Ultimately, capable learners are said to be self-directed in having the capacity to design and carry out their own learning activities (Thomas & Rohwer, 1986; Derry & Murphy, 1988; Glaser, 1990).

The research also indicates that a central function of cognitive learning strategies is to build connections between new information and prior knowledge. Studies indicate that prior domain knowledge--or some familiarity with a subject--facilitates comprehension and meaningful learning, based on early work by Ausubel (1968) and Wittrock (1974). More recently, generalizing from experimental studies of expert-novice differences in problem-solving, researchers hypothesize that cognitive learning strategies depend largely on the learner's knowledge base. That is, greater knowledge of a subject enables the learner to focus on the deep structure of the material and to use higher-level strategies involving inferencing, analogical reasoning, and reflective or critical thinking (Chi, Glaser, & Rees, 1982; Glaser, 1984, 1990; Resnick, 1989).

Cognitive strategy research, then, would appear to be a promising

perspective in understanding adults' mental processes and the role of prior knowledge in learning. However, few studies have examined adult learning in a natural setting. Most research has been experimental or quasi-experimental, where either the learning strategy or the task was controlled, with participants being either children or traditional college students age 18 to 25. The findings, therefore, may not be generalizable to adult learning in natural settings.

## METHODS

Because it was uncertain if previous research would apply to adult learners age 25 and older in a natural, nonclassroom setting, an interpretive case study methodology was used to explore the learning process from the learners' perspective. Qualitative data were gathered in interviews with twenty adults enrolled in an independent study course in marketing, as part of an extended degree program to earn a baccalaureate in business administration.

Because learners enrolled at different times and progressed at different paces, sequential criterion-based sampling (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984) was used to interview students who were 25 years or older and at least mid-way through the coursework. Interviewed were 15 women and 5 men, ages 25 to 51, with an average age of 37. All were Caucasian and resided in urban and rural communities throughout Wisconsin. Prior to enrolling in the program, most had completed at least two years of college, although half had not been in school for ten years or more. The course and sample were judged by program administrators to be typical of the extended degree program.

The interview was semi-structured, conversational in style, and averaged 75 minutes. Participants were asked to describe how they went about reading and studying one module of course material--what they did and why. As a stimulated recall technique, participant's learning materials were used as a physical point of reference during the interview to help reconstruct the learning experience and to provide secondary observational data (Ericcson & Simon, 1980). The interviews were audiotaped and transcribed. Data analysis included techniques of pattern coding, inter-coder reliability, matrix analysis, audit trail, and peer examination of findings (Miles & Huberman, 1984).

## FINDINGS

Types of Cognitive Strategies: The findings revealed that learners engaged in various cognitive activities in reading and studying course material, and those activities generally paralleled the types of cognitive strategies identified in prior research (Weinstein & Mayer, 1986). As shown in Table 1, learners used four types of cognitive strategies that served different primary functions and involved various learning and thinking skills.

Learners used rehearsal strategies to reproduce factual knowledge or to review material for an exam. Their organization strategies were mainly directed to analyzing text structure and interpreting the logical meaning of the material, although learners differed in the degree they penetrated the underlying structure--theme, main ideas, principles, relationships, and supporting details. Learners' elaboration strategies varied widely, ranging from simple associations between a concept and an example, to typical study strategies of paraphrasing and summarizing, to complex strategies for constructing new meanings and knowledge representations through analogical and integrative processes.

Strategy Patterns and Goals: Findings revealed a coherent pattern to participants' strategies. Each learner used a number of strategies that worked together in a purposeful way to accomplish reading tasks. Three variations in reading patterns were found, with each characterized by a particular set, or cluster, of strategies that served certain goals. Each pattern was conceptualized as a different approach to learning and called: (1) a reproducing approach; (2) a comprehension approach; and (3) an application approach. Participants were almost evenly divided among the three groups.

As summarized in Table 2, strategy patterns for the three groups differed in strategy emphasis--or where mental effort was focused--in rehearsing, in organizing, or in elaborating the text. The learners' strategy emphasis also showed variations in degree of cognitive activity and depth of processing, ranging from a passive and shallow processing at a level of verbatim reproduction to active and elaborative processing at a level of knowledge construction and integration.

Findings also revealed that strategies could not be divorced from goals. The essence of a strategy was that it consisted of an action--a thought or behavior--that was carried out to accomplish goals or purposes. As shown in Table 2, the three strategy patterns served different cognitive intentions and extrinsic or intrinsic goal orientations. Comparing the three groups, the deepest learning involved a combination of complex organization and elaboration strategies serving cognitive goals of understanding and applying the material as well as intrinsic purposes for learning.

Influence of Prior Knowledge: Because of everyday experiences as consumers, all of the participants were somewhat familiar with the concept of marketing. However, eleven participants had no additional experience (relative novices). Seven had worked for five or more years in certain areas of marketing (relative experts).

The findings suggested that differences in cognitive strategies were not directly related to the amount of prior domain knowledge. Rather, the use of prior knowledge in learning was mediated by cognitive goals and motivation.

The ways learners used prior domain knowledge were most evident in their elaboration strategies, where a student's goals and motives affected how actively domain knowledge was applied to learning. Learners with a reproducing approach were simply reminded of past experiences or related examples to concepts to aid remembering. On the other hand, learners with an application approach employed complex elaboration strategies that used prior knowledge to expand upon the original meaning of the text and to construct new knowledge through higher-level cognitive processes of analogical reasoning, reflection, evaluation, problem posing, and application to everyday life.

Although application learners tended to have more prior domain knowledge on average, the group included some relative novices. Expert knowledge, then, seemed not to be essential to higher-order processing. In addition, not all relative experts used higher-level strategies, depending on their goals and motives for learning.

## CONCLUSIONS

Adults' natural ways of learning in this study were generally consistent with prior research on the cognitive strategies employed by learners in various academic settings. Studies have typically shown that rehearsal strategies involve shallow



Table 1. Types of Cognitive Strategies

Selection Strategies

Function: To focus attention and to identify relevant information

Examples: Focusing externally on text cues or study guide aids, focusing internally on personal needs and interests

Rehearsal Strategies

Function: To remember information by repetition

Examples: Memorizing, repeating, highlighting, copying, reading aloud, reviewing

Organization Strategies

Function: To build connections within the text

Examples: Determining main ideas and relationships, outlining, listing, classifying, ordering, diagramming, comparing/contrasting

Elaboration Strategies

Function: To expand the meaning and to build connections to prior knowledge/experience

Examples: Paraphrasing, summarizing, generative notetaking, imaging, creating analogies, associating ideas with examples, applying to work or everyday life, comparing to prior academic knowledge, roleplaying, reflecting, evaluating, discussing, questioning, relating to beliefs, explaining, problem-solving

Table 2. Strategy Patterns

| Features                              | Reproducing Approach                        | Comprehension Approach                                    | Application Approach                                                                                       |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Strategy emphasis                     | Rehearsal strategies                        | Organization strategies                                   | Elaboration and organization strategies                                                                    |
| Cognitive activity                    | Passive and shallow                         | Active and interpretive                                   | Active and elaborative                                                                                     |
| Cognitive intention                   | Remember verbatim                           | Organize and interpret                                    | Understand and apply                                                                                       |
| Interests & motives                   | Entirely extrinsic                          | Mainly extrinsic some intrinsic                           | About equally extrinsic and intrinsic                                                                      |
| Use of prior knowledge in elaboration | Examples from daily life to aid remembering | Paraphrasing, summarizing, and examples to interpret text | Analogies, problem-posing, reflecting, evaluating, and other complex strategies to understand & apply text |

processing at a level of verbatim learning, while organization and elaboration strategies involve processing at deeper levels of meaning and understanding (e.g., Weinstein & Mayer, 1986). However, this study found that adults exhibited a richer variety of elaboration strategies and more complex thinking processes than generally found in studies of traditional college students. The study's findings also revealed that the amount of prior domain knowledge did not by itself account for differences in cognitive learning strategies, as suggested by expert-novice differences in problem solving. Rather, how prior knowledge was used in learning was influenced by the learners' cognitive intentions and extrinsic or intrinsic purposes for learning. In conclusion, a learning strategy perspective drawn from cognitive psychology suggests a promising avenue for further research; and additional studies are needed in other settings to investigate the complex interactions among cognition, motivation, and prior knowledge.

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## PERSPECTIVE TRANSFORMATION THEMES AMONG RURAL MIDLIFE COLLEGE STUDENTS: SUBTLE VS. DRAMATIC CHANGES

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**Abstract:** This perspective-seeking study of ten midlife students in a rural community college environment qualitatively explores life histories, personal meanings of learning/education, and perspective transformation among a scantily researched group. Findings indicate: (1) Life history dictated a devalued view of education, (2) education is valued for its utility, (3) personal change is varied and sometimes left undefined, (4) perspective transformation is feared due to possible cultural alienation, and (5) "trigger" events leading to college entry impede or enable original life goals to be realized.

### PERSPECTIVE

Cross (1981) states "The necessity to adapt to changing circumstances of life constitutes a powerful motivating force for learning" (p.144). Changes that lead to learning are called "trigger events" (Aslanian & Brickell, 1980). Seeking additional education is a common response to a trigger event in adulthood. However, some midlife students seem to reflect and voice more personal changes in self and world view than do others in the same setting. The disparity in learning and consequent personal change is addressed by many contemporary adult learning theorists. Jack Mezirow (1991) defines learning as "a dialectical process of interpretation in which we interact with objects and events, guided by an old set of expectations.... In transformative learning, however, we reinterpret an old experience (or a new one) from a new set of expectations, thus giving a new meaning and perspective to the old experience" (p.11). Merriam and Clark (1991), expanding on Mezirow's perspective transformation theory, offer an intermediate stage on the continuum toward transformation. This stage is referred to as "expansion," in which a personally significant learning experience involves an expansion of skills and abilities, a sense of self, or life perspective. In separate research, Karpiak (1991) articulates three discrete processes of change in midlife adults: (1) Transformation, (2) Self Renewal, and (3) On the Threshold of Becoming. Given the lack of consensus, the purpose of this study was to increase understanding of the relationship of learning, perspective transformation, and trigger events among rural midlife college students.

### METHODOLOGY

A naturalistic/qualitative approach (Guba & Lincoln, 1985) was used in this perspective-seeking study. Ten community college students, between the ages of 35 and 50, were personally interviewed. Five participants volunteered for the project, while the remaining five were identified as being appropriate subjects and encouraged to participate. Each participant was interviewed two times by the senior author. The open-ended interviews ranged from 1 1/2 hours to 2 1/2 hours. In the initial phase of the interviews, an unstructured format allowed the individual to personally chronicle and assign meaning to his/her own history. In



the latter stages of the interview, the researcher probed in areas specific to learning, education and personal change. All interviews were taped and transcribed in an effort to collect the individuals' authentic "voices."

### PARTICIPANT PROFILE

The overarching profile of these participants illuminates understanding of the group. Without exception, all of the participants are Caucasian and come from working class homes in which neither parent was college educated. Most were reared in homes in which both parents were present in the home and shared parental responsibilities. They related paternal occupations such as welder, bartender, mechanic, painter, baker's helper, farmer, salesman, and military. Most of the participants' mothers worked intermittently throughout their childhoods, never really having a career but rather working at minimum wage jobs to supplement the family income. Maternal occupations were: homemaker, cook, waitress, dry cleaner's laborer, library clerk, factory worker, and nurse's aide. Only two were reared as only children, but eight came from families with three or less children. Several spoke of close ties with extended families. Although not all participants reported regular church attendance in the primary family, all were of a Christian persuasion.

Not surprisingly, the participants tend to mirror primary family patterns in their adult lives. All of the five women were married prior to twenty-one years of age and are currently involved in long-term marriages. Three of the five men in this study were also married before their twenty-first birthday. Only one person, a male, has never married. It should be noted, however, that he aspires to marriage. Seventy-five percent of the participants have children. Of those who have children, all have three or less. Prior to college, the males were involved in the following occupations: welder, military, printer, and auto body repairman. The women, like their mothers, have been employed intermittently in jobs such as secretary, clerk, and food store checker to supplement the family income. None has worked outside the home during her entire adulthood. The majority view their husband as the primary breadwinner. The group is not extremely mobile. Five of the ten individuals were reared in a fifty-mile radius of this community. Three came to the community through military moves. The majority plan to stay in this rural area and are adamant about staying, i.e. - "my ultimate [goal] is to get back to this area because I don't like big cities."

### CONCLUSIONS

#### (1) Life history dictated a devalued view of education.

For these offspring of working class homes, survival issues over-shadowed lofty, seemingly unattainable goals of higher education. At eighteen, this group did not factor in college. The females aspired to family and home, the males aspired to working class jobs. Replete in the interviews are voices of the women reminiscent of past gender paradigms. Married at sixteen to her husband (age 17), Marla quit school the first semester of her senior year. "... after we got married, I decided I wasn't going to have to do anything as far as schooling, I was going to be a housewife and raise my kids..." Another woman

remarked, "... I had a scholarship (to college) ... I felt like since I was [a] wife, I needed to be at home." Still another, "... Things then, you know, I was just going to be a mom, and married, at that time, I thought that was all I needed ... all I ever really thought about was get married and have babies." Like the female participants, the males in the study did not complete college directly after high school. Three of five went directly to work, while two attended college for a short time without commitment. One participant attended for three semesters on a track scholarship, but dropped out to take a job in a local factory. He recounted, "I had an opportunity to go to work at this factory... All my buddies that (had graduated from college), were just making, with two years experience, \$11,000 or \$12,000... So, I had this chance to go to work, and in the first year, I made over \$19,000 at the factory." Another attended college part time and worked during the day to avoid the draft during the Vietnam War. After three semesters, he too, quit. Four of five males were in the military prior to their 20th birthday. While one of the men stated he entered the military because he genuinely aspired to a career, for the others the reason seemed to be primarily pragmatic. Overall, the male participants viewed themselves as below average learners in high school. Example: "I was a poor student... I just didn't pay attention in class and didn't try to apply myself." On the other hand, most women reported the perception of being above average learners. Example: "I've always been smart enough to finish school... thought I was an average student. I knew I could do better, but I didn't apply myself." None of the participants mentioned a high school teacher or another mentor type who strongly encouraged them to attend college. Several said their parents did not encourage them to attend college. One woman explained, "They (parents) weren't involved in my school work and stuff and didn't encourage me, because they didn't know much about it."

## (2) Education is valued for its utility.

For some participants, primarily males, the value of a college education is measured in external currency. Common responses concerning the value of education were: (a) "To help you in your future job career. That's about the only thing I can think of," (b) "[A degree means] that I can go on with my life... I would like to be able to buy a house, get settled...," and (c) "Education is being able to do and get the things that if you weren't educated, you couldn't [like] a better job, maybe even a better social status. You're not considered poor if you get a better job." A minority of participants, primarily females, indicated that education had helped them in additional ways: (a) "... for myself to grow. Learning is something that will never stop...," and (b) "Well, not only to go out into this world looking [for] your job, your career, your inner self, I think, needs it just for general knowledge." Some made a clear distinction between learning and education. One individual explained, "I think the life experience is a little more outside the classroom. College to me is just ... something that you have to have to go on. ... but I think life offers a lot of experience... College is to get you ready for a career." This individual and others in the study referred to a college degree as a "ticket."

(3) Personal change is varied and often left undefined.

Change has been varied. Some, primarily males, have expanded their knowledge and skills to enhance career options while others, mostly women, report more personal change. Four of the five women in this study stated they had personally changed as well as increased their knowledge and skills while in college. Interestingly, all of them first noted the same change - greater self-confidence. The current life transitions which brought these two groups to college appear to be different; while the male group is experiencing a career transition, the female group is undergoing a personal transition and to a much lesser degree a career transition. These participants do not report a total reordering of personal meaning perspectives but rather an "expanded" sense of self, such as Merriam and Clark (1991) describe. The participants who reported personal change in the last five years did not make overt connections between possible events leading to change, thus giving the impression that they themselves do not understand the sequence or process(es) which brought about the change(es).

(4) Fear of perspective transformation due to possible cultural alienation.

These individuals maintain strong family and religious affiliations, therefore, personal change that might have negative or alienating affects on these relationships seems to be left undefined. One female participant who is an active member of a charismatic, fundamental religious group feels she has become more self-confident and "is more aware of things now" and plans to vote for the first time in the next election. She reports that she can voice her opinions now, for instance at her children's school. She says, "There are things that I am more tolerant about... I used to wouldn't even allow... my kids to watch a movie that had vulgarity in it... In a way, I think I was over-protective... [now] I'm more tolerant of people living together." However, she was quick to explain that her beliefs had definitely not changed.

Another example of a woman trying to preserve a family relationship by denying her personal change is listed below:

"I don't think [I've changed any]. That's something my daddy teases me about ... he has talked about these book-educated people, which I think you can understand the type, you know... and, he's always teasing me saying you're going to be one of them book-smart people. I say, No, Daddy, I'm still the same [as] I was. "I feel like I have a lot of common sense." Moments later, in the same interview, she recounted numerous personal changes.

This woman's conflict is explained by Jarvis (1992), "People in contemporary society live in patterned and organized relationships, and any change in one person will mean that the relationships are affected ... Consequently, some relationships do not survive the effects of learning, and yet it is in those very relationships that the highest values of humanity are manifest" (p.220).

(5) Trigger events leading to college entry impede or enable original life goals to be realized.

Some participants reported overall positive experiences in school (K-12) prior

to college, but their social reality served as a barrier to participation in higher education. This was typical of the women in this study who were solely focused on homemaking, a role that excluded college directly after high school. Their trigger events leading to college entry typically removed barriers to college participation thus enabling them to complete personal goals that were not initially congruent with their social reality. For others, who typically had negative experiences in school prior to college, trigger events leading to college entry impeded their goals, thereby making it necessary to use college as a bridge, a "ticket," to another acceptable reality. The group who viewed their trigger events as enabling wanted to attend college and also reported more personal change. Also, they attributed more of the change to college and valued education for its own reward more than the other participants. On the other hand, the group who viewed personal trigger events as impeding had to attend college and also reported less positive personal change. Also, they attributed less change to college experiences.

### SUMMARY

The tentative conclusions of this study suggest that some individuals return to a learning environment as a result of personal development as they move through the life span. This "trigger event" is more a subtle evolution than a dramatic event. Those who returned to school for this less disorienting reason tend to reflect "expansion" of skills and abilities, sense of self, or life perspective, as described by Merriam & Clark (1991), rather than perspective transformation, a total reordering of the self as suggested by Mezirow (1991). Further findings indicate this group remains highly connected with extended family and fear of possible cultural alienation sometimes presents an additional barrier to change. Further studies with rural, working class, adult learners are indicated.

### IMPLICATIONS

Unlike Aslanian & Brickell's (1980) adult learners these learners are not better educated, wealthier, and living in an urban area (p.110). Rather, they represent working class, primarily rural, adults who are less prepared for higher education. Given this, it is ethically imperative that educators attend to the learning needs of these learners by offering additional support services and learning opportunities which facilitate a greater understanding of the dynamics of learning, personal change, social constraints, and the myriad functions of education, of which their privileged counterparts are so often already aware.

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IMPLEMENTATION RESEARCH: UNDERSTANDING THE APPLICATION OF LEARNING  
FOLLOWING CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

Judith M. Ottoson

**Abstract**

This study operationally defines and refines a conceptual framework to analyze the application of learning following continuing professional education (CPE). The factors which affect application are deduced from implementation theory and research and induced from interviews with CPE participants. They are further tested with pre- and post-course questionnaires.

**Introduction**

Adult educators often assume the application of learning following continuing professional education. Despite the upbeat feelings by participants at the end of well-taught CPE programs, it is estimated that less than 10% of the \$100 billion spent annually on training in the U.S. results in transfer to the job (Georgenson, 1982). While educators have studied their own implementation during programs, we know relatively little about participants' implementation following programs.

Implementation research is used as the method of inquiry in this study. This type of research brings contextual perspective to the basic question of the relation between thought and action: "How can ideas manifest themselves in a world of behavior?" (Pressman & Wildavsky, 1973). During the first phase of this study a conceptual framework was developed from literature reviews to identify six broad factors that affect implementation of learning following CPE. In this phase of the study that framework is tested deductively with CPE participants through questionnaires and inductively through interviews.

**Approaches to Studying the Post-CPE Experience**

Just what do participants do in their post-CPE experience? Apply? Translate? Transfer? Diffuse? Implement? Utilize? Adopt? Various literatures contribute to an understanding of the process. The transfer of learning literature draws from psychology and is concerned with the influence of prior learning upon later learning (Baldwin & Ford, 1988). The diffusion literature identifies implementation as that part of the innovation-decision process where an innovation is put to use (Rogers, 1983). The Concerns Based Adoption Model draws on the diffusion literature to look at the relationship of participant stages of concern, innovation configuration, and levels of innovation use (Hord, et al, 1987). The knowledge utilization literature examines the multiple uses of knowledge and its relationship to decision making (Weiss, 1980). Although there is no specific "application" literature, articles suggest ways in which the process can be improved (Kemerer, 1991).

The implementation literature provides another view of the post-CPE experience. Drawing on policy analysis, this literature adds

perspective to the definition and context of implementation. It highlights the relationships of the innovation (policy) with social, economic, political, organizational, and interpersonal factors (Ottoson, 1984). It examines ways in which the ideas of an innovation are changed, owned, and translated into behavior. While evaluation seeks to determine the value of such a process, implementation research seeks to describe the process. It does this by holding the tension between innovation intent and practice realities. Perhaps its best contribution to the post-60's era was asking questions about process. It did not assume that having a good idea, policy, or program was enough.

Taken together, these multiple lenses provide a relatively full view of the post-CPE experience. The view is blurred, however, with an abundance of variables. Which ones are critical to the application of CPE learning? Which ones can adult educators do something about?

#### **Conceptual Framework**

The adult education literature offers numerous models to plan programs, but few frameworks to examine the post-CPE experience. The Cervero framework proposes four factors: individual professional, CPE program, proposed change, and social system (Cervero & Rottet, 1984). The health education literature offers a model of program planning and implementation which has at its heart factors that predispose, enable, and reinforce behavioral change (Green & Kreuter, 1991).

Building on these tested models and additional literature reviews, a conceptual framework was developed in the first phase of this study to analyze the post-CPE experience, Figure 1 (Ottoson, 1992). Six general factors which influence application were identified: (1) characteristics of the educational intervention, e.g., methods, design, practice time, (2) innovation or the nature of the proposed change, (3) predisposing factors, e.g., knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, values, (4) enabling factors, e.g., skills, resources, (5) reinforcing factors, e.g., support, reward, and (6) contextual factors, e.g., timing, organization, climate. The independent variables in the framework are the educational intervention and the innovation. Two layers of dependent variables follow. The first layer are factors that predispose, enable, and reinforce participants to the second layer of the dependent variable, application. While the general factors in the conceptual framework were developed in phase one of the study, the specific variables within those factors are pilot tested and refined in this study.

#### **Methodology**

Deductive and inductive approaches were used alternately to identify variables and develop instruments to test the conceptual framework. Participants from two CPE workshops served as subjects and informants for this study. The content, instructors, format, and participants were comparable for both workshops. Group one (N=35)

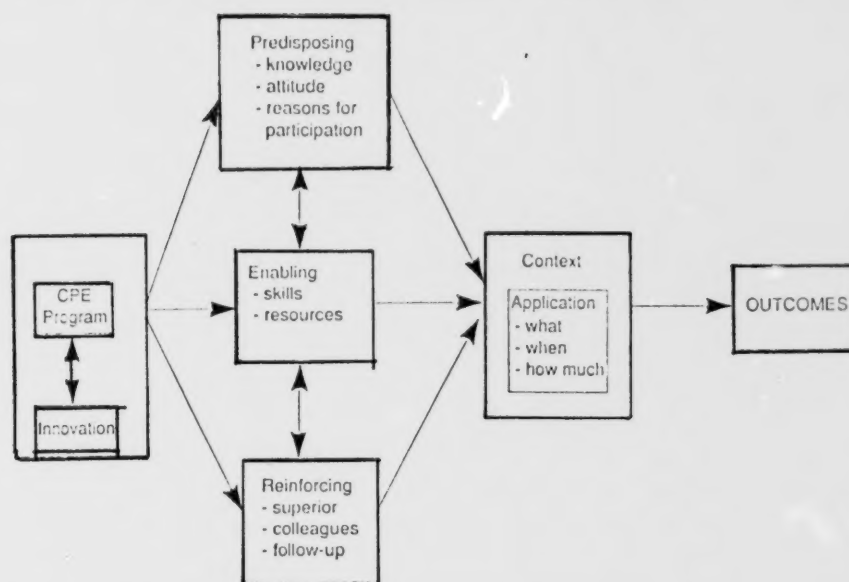


Fig 1. Modified Procede Framework: Facilitators and Barriers to the Application of Continuing Professional Education. J. M. Otlosori, 1992.

attended a 5-day version of the workshop; Group two (N=110) attended a 2-day version. Group one received a questionnaire at three months post-workshop that probed variables deduced from various literature reviews. These included amount of practice time, content level, perceived adaptability of the innovation, understanding, reasons for attending, perception of skill level, support for application, and contextual facilitators and barriers. Written descriptions of application were also solicited. Twenty-seven participants returned the questionnaire.

Interviews were conducted as an inductive method of discovering variables not found in the literature and to further press for descriptions of the nature of CPE application. All 27 Group one participants who returned questionnaires gave telephone interviews ranging from 15 minutes to one hour. The interviews asked open-ended questions about reasons for participation, experiences during the workshop, intent upon leaving the workshop, experiences on returning to work and barriers and facilitators to application. The interviews were used to question seeming discrepancies between participant self-rating of application and examples provided in writing or during the interview. Variables not tested in the questionnaires were revealed, along with participant perceptions of relationships among factors.

Data from Group one were used to expand and refine the questionnaire for the second round of participants. A second questionnaire was administered to Group two at the beginning, immediate end, and three months following their workshop. Despite high rates of return at each administration of the questionnaire, only 34 participants had matched sets of questionnaires for all three rounds. Telephone interviews were conducted to probe factors and application with 14 of 34 participants with matched data sets.

Data collected and the conceptual framework were both informed by the deductive and inductive methods. The factors of the framework



proved useful in grouping the variables tested; the interviews and qualitative data added or refined variables within frameworks. The frequency and rating of items on questionnaires were indicators of relative importance; the variables derived from the interviews indicated salience of these items to the participants. The nature and extent of application were derived almost entirely from written qualitative data or interviews. Since the purpose of this phase of the research was to develop the conceptual framework and measurement tools, statistical analysis of factors influencing application is not reported here.

### Findings

Application is not a dichotomous variable. Rather it is a complex and varied process. Ten of the 41 participants interviewed offered specific examples of innovation use. This includes nine (of 27) interviewees in Group one who provided examples of using the innovation to develop new programs or change existing programs. When asked to rate their post-workshop "application," the mean rating for the 34 matched participants in Group two was 1.88 on a five point scale where 1="no application." Of the 14 interviewees in Group 2, one provided an example of using the innovation to change an existing program. Although some do not describe the way in which the innovation was used, others clearly indicate the innovation was used in "bits and pieces."

Interviews revealed varied perceptions of application by participants. While some put the innovation on the "back burner," some described not having applied the innovation "traditionally," and others translated it to other forms. Some expressed "guilt" about translating the innovation and worried what the instructors "might think." Others were proud of their ability to translate successfully the innovation to their worksite. One participant considered application inappropriate because of his administrative position. A more appropriate outcome was a directive for others to use the innovation. While some spoke of generally "approaching my work differently," others offered examples of using the innovation so that application was not evident. Their emphasis was not on creating change, but "supporting what we are already doing." While some currently use the innovation, others see potential use in another place or time, and others have used the innovation, set it aside for now, and plan to reuse it in the future. Application is neither dichotomous nor a unidimensional scale.

The 41 interviews revealed layers of outcomes, most of which occurred at the first level of dependent variables (predisposed, enabled, and reinforced) and fewer at the second level of dependent variable, application. Outcomes classified as predisposing include: increase or confirm knowledge, "see things differently," carry idea of the innovation "in my head," integrate innovation into thinking about work, and see potential use of the innovation. In addition to these cognitive outcomes, other predisposing outcomes included feeling renewed or more confident or comfortable. Outcomes classified as enabling

include confirm or reassess my practice or skills. Reinforcing factors include networking, sharing information with others following the workshop, reaffirming my profession, and using the innovation to justify my practice or work. Networking, sharing, and seeing potential use of the innovation were the most frequently mentioned outcomes in interviews.

When asked about facilitators and barriers to application, participants look first at their immediate work environments. Their answers give understanding to the context of application. As expected from the literature, lack of resources, opportunity to apply, support from superiors and peers are rated on questionnaires and mentioned in interviews as barriers. Some unexpected variables emerged in the context, such as the "clean slate syndrome." Some participants perceive it easier to apply the innovation in a new setting, rather than return to the same work environment.

The framework explored facilitators and barriers to application that had less salience for participants. CPE program variables included amount of practice time, availability and credibility of the instructors, program structure, and content. Innovation variables included perceived adaptability and usefulness of the innovation. There was a significant correlation between perceived adaptability and usefulness of the innovation and intent to use. However, follow-up questionnaires showed a significant drop in perceived adaptability of the innovation 3 months post-workshop. While the participants look to their environments for barriers, their interviews sent the researcher back to predisposing factors. Participants with vague workshop expectations, no prior experience with the innovation, and self-deprecating perceptions, e.g., "peon," "mouse," "low on the totem pole," were less likely to engage the workshop and, in turn, less likely to experience change in either primary or secondary dependent variables.

#### Discussion

The results of the study indicate that CPE outcomes occur at multiple levels and in multiple forms. Application itself appears to be a multi-phase process. If application were solely judged by behavioral change, the first layer of dependent variables would be overlooked. Furthermore, applications may also be overlooked if they involve translation, bits and pieces, directives to others, and the de-emphasis on change for political reasons to "support what we already do." Multiple contextual, personal, and educational factors effect application. While participants primarily focus on contextual factors as barriers to application, the framework is useful to identify other barriers that may be equally important. The framework also puts the educational intervention in perspective as one of many interrelated factors affecting application.

Understanding the post CPE experience has implications for

teaching, evaluation, policy, and research. If CPE intends that participants will use their learning, then our understanding of what happens outside of the classroom can inform teaching inside the classroom. Application cannot be assumed, but needs inclusion in planning models along with teaching methods. If policy and program decisions are to be informed by the post-CPE experience and if the art of CPE is to increase its credibility, measures of application that cut across varied settings need to be operationalized.

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"Happy Consciousness": Hegemony and Hidden Curricula  
in Literacy Readers between 1977 and 1991

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**ABSTRACT:** When five widely used literacy series were content analyzed in 1977, racism, sexism and socio-economic stereotyping were discovered to "abound" in the texts. This reconstruction of that study finds today's readers have improved, but only slightly.

Giroux defines hidden curriculum as: "Unstated norms, values, and beliefs embedded in and transmitted to students through the underlying rules that structure the routines and social relationships in school and classroom life" (1983, p. 47). Vallence (1973, p. 12) describes it as: "Those non-academic but educationally significant consequences of schooling that occur systematically but are not made explicit at any level of the public rationales for education . . . It refers to the social control of schooling." Social control through curricula has become a major debate in the educational research (Apple, 1990), but a review of the adult literacy literature reveals that questions of hidden curricula and social control hardly exist.

With increasing accountability imposed in today's vocationally-oriented governmental policies (Quigley, 1991), literacy goals are being clearly affected from the "outside" by politics. Meanwhile, this study reveals how blatant hidden curricula appear are in our classrooms. Taken together, literacy's ideological messages to students in commercial readers and our largely uncritical acceptance of imposed policies point to obvious cultural/political reproduction underlying the role of literacy education in society. The question arises for the field if we will continue to accept the state of "Happy Consciousness" (Marcuse, p.79) revealed in our curricula and our practice--a state described by Marcuse, where: "The established system is rational and, in spite of aberrations, provides people with satisfying lives. To achieve this 'satisfaction,' however, people surrender their moral and critical faculties" (1979, p. 41).

SOCIAL CONTROL THROUGH HIDDEN CURRICULA

In 1977, Coles reported the findings of a content analysis of five of the most widely used ABE reading series of that time (p. 39): Cambridge Adult Basic Education Series, 1969; Educational Developmental Laboratories, 1966; Mott Basic Language Skills Program, 1965; Steck-Vaughn Company readers, 1974; and Sullivan Associates readers, 1966. He stated, "Thirty stories,



representing approximately grades one through three , were randomly selected from each set for a total of 150 stories . . . [These] comprised over 60% of the stories at these beginning levels" (p. 39). He concluded: "We have in these ABE texts . . . political statements about the social relations in society, statements which, unfortunately, are predominantly against the interests of adults who use the texts, many of whom are minorities and poor" (p. 52).

Coles categorized these "political statements" into: 1) Sex roles, 2) racial stereotypes, and 3) class differences. The latter he sub-categorized into: 3a) employee-employer characteristics, 3b) attitudes toward agencies of authority and/or hierarchical control, and 3c) problem-solving. In the current study, three of the most widely used series were analyzed: Laubach Way to Reading (Laubach, 1984), Challenger Adult Reading Series (Murphy, 1985) and Reading for Today/Tomorrow (Steck-Vaughn, 1987). These contain 146 narrative stories from pre-primer to fifth-grade level. Of these, 37 stories (25%) across the three series were randomly selected and analyzed, specifically: Laubach Skill books 1,2,3 and 4, Challenger 1, Challenger 3, and Reading for Today books 2,3,4, and 5.

#### STUDY DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

To reconstruct the Coles study, two researchers independently read, analyzed and coded the 37 stories according to standardized criteria and methods (Berelson, 1954). The stories were analyzed in three broad categories used by Coles. Standard definitions and reference points were applied throughout. Few discrepancies occurred between investigators in either study suggesting unambiguous, consistent data. Coles utilized chi-square analysis to test significant difference; this study utilized scissors-sort analysis.

In both, total male and female characters (as well as unidentified) were counted. Occupations, when stated, were ranked and genders were designated to them; story themes were categorized; characters' race was determined where possible through statement in the text, clear implication, or precise illustration.

#### FINDINGS COMPARED

Coles found "When story characters, including the majority of white males, are examined in terms of how they perceive themselves qua employees, citizens, and social beings, [they] are overwhelmingly isolated, conformist, uncritical, and frequently filled with self-blame" (p. 49). He adds: " Through thick and thin, they adhere to implicit or explicit beliefs that agencies of authority and hierarchical control are

working in harmony with them"; "when problems arise they have their own individual fortitude to rely on (or in the case of women, that of their men)" (pp. 49-50).

#### Gender Issues

In the representation of the sexes, "Enumeration of occupations showed that 106 males were engaged in 73 different occupations, from truck driving to medicine. In contrast, 39 females were engaged in 11 occupations; however, 19 (almost one-half . . . ) worked as housewives" (p. 42). "Women managed little and owned nothing; on the other hand, men, while holding a large number of unskilled jobs, were the predominant occupants of skilled, managerial, and ownership positions" (p. 42). Men were depicted as being rational and competent--women were often portrayed as "imbecilic" (p.49), as follows:

Ann suddenly awakes Jack, who is napping, to tell him the apartment is burning. He calls the fire department while Ann rushes around to save things. The firemen arrive and discover a burning chicken Ann left on the stove. Ann blushes 'red as a rose.'

(Sullivan Associates cited in Coles)

In the current study, 26 female characters (out of 56) had an occupation stated. Of these, eight (12.5%) were engaged in domestic roles and were typically depicted in blissful terms, such as Judy, homemaker:

Judy hugged and kissed him. She hugged her two boys. "These are my jewels, Lewis," she said, "you and the boys are my jewels. I am a happy wife and mother. We are rich, not poor." (Laubach Skill Book 4, p. 30)

Still incompetent, even in the depiction of cooking, cleaning or mending, only in six of the 37 stories were they entirely capable of the job. Of non-homemakers, 15 of 26 held subordinate/labor roles such as store clerk and secretary. Reading for Today revealed five of ten in subordinate roles (50%); Laubach five of 16 (31.3%); while Challenger, with no specific subordinate roles for working women, portrayed women such as "Ginger" as follows: "I'm studying up on yoga," said Jerome. "Yoga. Isn't that something you eat?" asked Ginger (Challenger, p.18). Only eight (of 26 women, 30.7%) were in managerial/professional: Two teachers, four librarians, and one a nurse--each stereotypical. .

#### Race Issues

In the Coles study, Black and Hispanic characters comprised 13% of the characters. Minority male characters were depicted positively only when they dominated minority females: "Carmen (a hot-tempered

Hispanic) is jealous and angry because she thinks Miguel, her boy friend, went out dancing after work instead of seeing her" (Educational..., cited in Coles, 1977). It takes [White] Roger, not Miguel to "calm her down." "Blacks displayed strength and heroism in three stories, but two of the three did so as boxers" (Coles, p. 44). Of three stories depicting cowardice, two used minorities to play the coward. Thus, in "Literacy Land in 1977," rational White males rule; obsequious minority males obey; vacuous White females need help, and minority females need to be controlled.

In the present study, of 65 identifiable by race/ethnicity, 25(38%) of the characters were White; 18(28%) Black; 21(32%) Hispanic; and 1(2%) Oriental--an improved ratio over 1977. But now racism is much more subtle. In "A New Start" (Laubach Skill Book 4, a young Black youth is condescendingly tutored by a White professional man on the Black man's interest in sports (p. 35). In "Who Needs to Read/The Report Card" (Reading for Today Level 4), a Black father is forced to admit to his son's White female teacher that he cannot read and humbly requests her help. While Hispanics can be farmers, store clerks, babysitters, and police, only one Black character is given an occupation, that of police officer. By contrast, White characters were depicted as: Pressroom manager, musician, or doctor. The only White character depicted as a laborer was a happy-go-lucky Irish immigrant--Mike O'Dell (Reading for Today Level 5).

#### Social Class

On the socioeconomic class level, Coles examined characters' uncritical acceptance of employers' attitudes, attitudes toward agencies of authority, and characters' problem solving ability, concluding that: "Employees as overwhelmingly content and uncritical in their jobs" (p. 45) in 26 of 30 stories. Jim, for instance, applies for and gets a stock clerk job and is "'always on time'", "'follows . . . rules'", is "'friendly but does not talk too much'" and "a good, obedient, happy worker" (cited in Coles, p. 45). The story notes direct the teacher to ask students: "'How do you feel about a person who is always telling bad things about his boss?'" and: "'Would you hire that kind of person?'" (Steck-Vaughn, cited in Coles, p. 45). In only four stories were employees even mildly critical--traits shown as blame the victim "'failings'" (p. 45) for which the misguided employees later suffered. Not surprisingly, criticisms of normative organizations, from police to banks "was . . . depicted as an unjustifiable attitude" (p.47). On problem solving, Coles found approximately half of the stories portrayed characters solving problems through isolated

individualism. Where problems were collectively solved: "two stories were sexist and only one presented a family as a group" (p. 48).

In the current study, blaming the victim remained part of the "problem solving" process. Twenty-one of the stories involved such problems as romantic squabbles, unemployment, juvenile delinquency, smoking, stress, and robbery. The ten who resolved their own problems did so in sorry isolation. In only five did the victims of problems turn to organized authorities, going alone, believing authority is always working for their benefit. In "Good Ending" (Reading for Today, Level 2), a young man is arrested through a case of mistaken identity. His mother, talking to him on a telephone through the glass partition in a prison visiting room, says, "At times they do arrest people by mistake. The wrong people pay for it. We're with you in this time of trouble. The family will stand by you, Ed." In reply, Ed says: "They'll get the man that looks like me. With luck the man will be arrested and do time for this trouble." Mother says: "This will have a good ending, and you will win." Ed's reply is: "I feel bad about being arrested. But I'll feel good about this man being in the hands of the law. I'll feel good about going home!" (p.57-59).

#### Employer/Employee Characteristics

Of four stories with vocational themes, three featured employees who were utterly uncritical. These stories assume employees are basically lazy or portray less-than-eager workers as comic and immature. In one story, Dave wakes up in a bad mood to show readers how immaturity can be our downfall as workers:

"What a day this is going to be!" said a very mad Dave to the cat. "It's no use going out when you get up on the wrong side of the bed." Dave wiped up the jam, kicked the cat outside, went back to bed, and dozed off at once. (Challenger 1, p. 25)

In "Tony's Day Off" (Challenger 3), employers learn to guard against goof-offs. Tony pretends to be sick and calls off work. He is later caught by his boss while shopping in a men's store. The boss then shows how justice is meted to such as Tony: "You'll have all the time in the world to shop for fancy clothes now . . . declared Mr. Dennis as he poked his head behind the curtain, "you're fired!" (p. 90-91)

#### DISCUSSION

Graham (1989) warns that the content of textbooks: "Should alert us to a blind spot in our assumptions and



textual practices"; adding, "If the authority of the textbook and the knowledge legitimated therein remains unchallenged and taken-for-granted, then what we consider our most enlightened and emancipated teaching strategies may be discovered to have their footing in ideological quicksand" (p.416). The current study suggested that much of the hidden curricula found in 1977 continues in lower quantity but similar ideology. Content has shifted away from blatant racism while sexism and socio-economic depictions remain largely unchanged. Throughout Literacy Land, uncritical acceptance of one's place still reigns.

Based on this study, one must ask not only how our students will gain the self-esteem and critical capacity so often referred to in our literature and sought in "emancipated teaching strategies" if our own hidden curricula mitigates so ardently against it? Further, how can we expect more than student Happy Consciousness in classrooms if we surrender our own "moral and critical faculties" (Marcuse, 1966, p. 41)?

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**Anna Cooper and Nannie Burroughs: Educating Head, Heart, and Hand in the  
Early 20th Century African American Community**  
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**Abstract:** The contributions and holistic educational philosophies of Anna Cooper and Nannie Burroughs are examined as examples of the "neglected histories" of adult education. Also discussed are their perspectives on issues of race and gender.

Among African Americans education has always been considered a "tool for advancement and acceptance... and a means for uplifting and improving life in the black community" (Lerner, 1972, p. 75). Lucy Laney (1899) advised educated Black women that they should be willing to give advice, set direction, be public lecturers, develop and teach classes, and to inspire young men and women. In promoting education for the masses, these women encountered various opinions, especially as related to education of African American women. Some believed women should be "trained to teach in order to lift the masses of their people and to become excellent homemakers for their husbands and children" (Robinson, 1978, p. 56). Some questioned their intellectual ability. Still others questioned the need to train them for jobs. Despite a variety of arguments questioning the value of their education or its proper form, African American women of the late 19th and early 20th century recognized education as their only escape from societal limitation. Nannie Helen Burroughs and Anna Cooper were two of the women who took up Laney's charge by serving as educational leaders and community servants.

Anna Julia Cooper

Anna Julia Cooper began life as a slave in 1858 and lived to see the Civil Rights era, making innumerable contributions toward the education of African Americans during her 105 years, both through her formal role as an educator and her involvements in the Black women's club movement, the settlement house movement, and the YWCA. Following her untimely widowhood at age 21 she attended college at Oberlin University, one of the few colleges providing higher education to both women and Blacks at the time. She was older than most students at Oberlin and is said to have been more serious in her pursuits because of this (Hutchinson, 1981). Cooper resumed her formal studies in her 50's when she matriculated for the Ph.D. at Columbia University in 1914. Completing the period of residence required for this degree was made difficult when she became guardian in 1915 of five nieces and nephews ranging in age from 6 months to 12 years. She completed requirements for the Ph. D. at the Sorbonne in Paris at age 65 with a dissertation titled "The Attitudes of France toward Slavery during the Revolution" (Cooper, 1925/ 1988).

Much of her professional life was spent at the M Street high school, the only high school in Washington for Blacks when she started teaching there. (Hutchinson, 1981). The school had a four-year classical curriculum and a two-year business education program; it was her fight for the preservation of the classical curriculum during the industrial education boom that apparently cost Cooper her principalship in 1906 (Gabel, 1982; Harley & Terborg-Penn, 1978). After spending several years in "exile" teaching at Lincoln University, she was recalled as a teacher to the M Street school by its next principal. Following her return in 1910 she remained at the school until retirement in 1930 (Hutchinson, 1981, p. 164).

Retirement from the public schools provided an opportunity to move on to new educational horizons. Living off her retirement income, she voluntarily took on the role of president of Frelinghuysen University after the death of its founder, Jesse Lawson. Frelinghuysen represented a unique concept in adult education. Rather than a campus, its facilities consisted of a galaxy of satellite "home schools" sometimes operating out of the homes of instructors. The programs provided for working adults included some vocational courses (bookkeeping, filing, business mathematics, business law, elementary

banking procedures and business English); but it also offered both junior college and college level curriculums in subjects including Schools of Liberal Arts, Sociology, Applied Science, Fine Arts, Sociology, Theology, Law and Pharmacy. By the time Cooper inherited the school in 1930 it was beleaguered by financial problems, existing on a hand-to-mouth budget and volunteer services of teachers. It was dealt a final blow as a university when its accreditation was denied in 1936 (Chateauvert, 1988). Cooper continued as registrar of the Frelinghuysen Group of Schools for Colored Working People until she retired in 1949. Frelinghuysen did not cease operations until 1960.

Anna Cooper placed great value on education in terms of its benefits both to individuals and society. In an essay entitled "What are we worth?" she commented:

Education, then, is the safest and richest investment possible to man. It pays the largest dividends and gives the grandest possible product to the world - a man. The demand is always greater than the supply -- and the world pays well for what it prizes. (Cooper, 1892/1988, p. 245)

Nor did she see its value as restricted to the preparation of "men." In an essay titled "The Higher Education of Women," she expressed her support for the modestly expanding opportunities for higher education of women, and lamented that such opportunities were less frequently available and encouraged for Black women.

We might as well expect to grow trees from leaves as hope to build up a civilization or a manhood without taking into consideration our women and the home life made by them, which must be the root and ground of the whole matter. Let us insist then on special encouragement for the education of our women and special care in their training. Let our girls feel that we expect something more of them than that they merely look pretty and appear well in society. (Cooper, 1892/1988, p. 78)

In addition to her clear expressions regarding who education should be available for, she frequently expressed her thoughts on the appropriate content or focus of education. In an essay included in her 1892 book *A Voice of the South*, she argued that industrial education had been neglected as Blacks sought to dispute myths that they were incapable of studying the classics. Yet, at the same time she encouraged the recognition of talents more intellectual or artistic directions:

The white engineer holds a tight monopoly both of the labor market and of the science of his craft. Nothing would induce him to take a colored apprentice or even to work beside a colored workman. Unless then trades are to fall among the lost arts for us as a people, they must be engrafted on those benevolent institutions for Negro training established throughout the land. . . . One mind in a family or in a town may show a penchant for art, for literature, for the learned professions, or more bookish lore. You will know it when it is there. No need to probe for it. It is light that cannot be hid under a bushel--and I would try to enable that mind to go the full length of its desires. (Cooper, 1892/1988, pp. 262-263).

Just as she had argued in earlier years for the place of industrial education, later at Frelinghuysen her perception of the necessity of higher education for Blacks became a motivating force for her vigorous efforts to keep the institution alive. In an article appearing in the journal of the Frelinghuysen Alumnae Club in the 1930s she said:

As then, the lines have been drawn tighter and tighter, the man who is colored and poor finds himself left out of the educational reckoning and surely in need of those agencies for college extension and higher education which may be initiated by the resourceful sympathies of his own leaders. (Gabel, 1981, p. 71)

Her fundamental belief in the multiple purposes of education is perhaps best captured in the quote from an unpublished manuscript titled "Educational programs":

The only sane education is that which conserves the very lowest stratum, the best and most economical is that which gives each individual according to his capacity that training of "head, hand, and heart.... (Chateauvert, 1988, p. 10)

In addition to her teaching and educational administration, Cooper gained a reputation as an articulate writer on issues related to race and gender, and was a frequently invited speaker at the national and international level. Recognition of her talents as a scholar enabled her to move in circles not common for women in her day. She was the only woman ever elected a member of the American Negro Academy; similarly she was among the few women attending the Pan-African Conference in London in 1900 who had a position on the platform. Her dual involvement in women's organizations and organizations concerned with racial uplift reflected her forward-thinking perspective on the impact of racism and sexism faced by Black women.

"The colored woman of to-day occupies, one may say, a unique position in this country. In a period itself transitional and unsettled, her status seems one of the least ascertainable and definitive of all the forces which make for our civilization. She is confronted by both a woman question and a race problem, and is as yet an unknown or an unacknowledged factor in both. (Cooper, 1892/1988, p. 134)

She believed the Black women held unique advantages in addressing both the "race question" and the "woman question." Regarding her unique position to provide leadership in the Black community, she offered, "Only the BLACK WOMAN can say, 'when and where I enter, in the quiet, undisputed dignity without suing or special patronage, then and there the whole *Negro race enters with me*' (Cooper, 1892/1988, p. 31.)

#### Nannie Helen Burroughs

Following the footsteps of Anna J. Cooper, Lucy Laney, and Fanny J. Coppin, Nannie Helen Burroughs wanted to become a teacher. Upon graduating from the M Street School and college, Burroughs sought an appointment as domestic science teacher with the Washington, D.C. school district. Even though she did not receive the appointment she started working on plans to open a school for girls. And like Lucy Laney, she urged African American women to establish their own institutions.

Now, do you think it time for us to something for ourselves? Two million and a half Christian people, actively engaged in the prosecution of missionary work, needing the services of missionaries and Bible teachers, day by day and Sabbath by Sabbath, and yet this mighty host in its organized capacity has no school of its own. (NBC, 1907, p. 60)

Nannie Helen Burroughs had strong opinions on issues and concerns regarding racial pride, moral and social behavior of African American men and women, and the suffrage movement. She believed that "When Black women get the vote it will find her a tower of strength of which poets have never sung, orators have never spoken and scholars have never written" (Burroughs, 1915, p. 187). On racial pride, she challenged African Americans to spiritualize and exalt their race:

It is the Negro's sacred duty to spiritualize American life and popularize his own color instead of worshipping the color(or lack of color) of another race. It can be



done in Negro life, in pictures, in plays, in books, in spirit...His happy spirit and varied hue make him the very spice of life among other races. No race is richer in soul quality and color than the Negro. (Burroughs, 1927, p.301)

Burroughs' philosophy centered around moral self-improvement which would serve as the basis for racial uplift. Likewise, her educational philosophy was built around her religious beliefs, racial pride, self-help, and social equality. Burroughs believed in the saying "action speaks louder than words", thus she sought not only in "making a living but in making a life" (Daniel, 1931, p. 109). She was strongly motivated by her belief in God (Barnett, 1979).

Burroughs worked as bookkeeper and editorial secretary for the Foreign Mission Board of the NBC. While working for the Foreign Mission Board, she founded the Women's Industrial Club. The club provided economical, wholesome lunches for women in the Louisville, Kentucky community. At night she would provide classes in bookkeeping, shorthand, typewriting, millinery, cooking, sewing, and handicrafts. Students would pay \$0.10 for each lesson (Daniel, 1931). Eventually, Burroughs had to hire additional staff to assist with the increase of students enrolling in the club. The Women's Industrial Club remained active for more than ten years.

The church, like women's clubs and organizations, has been a place where African American women contributed to the self-help and educational development of the community. Nowhere was this more prevalent than in the Black Baptist church. It was within the Black women's auxiliary that women were able to reflect on their commitment to the race, address their own needs and interest, as well as draw scripture from the Bible to defend women's rights in the church and in society (Brooks, 1984). At the 1900 National Baptist Convention, the Women's Missionary League was organized; it was here that Nannie Burroughs "launched her long and illustrious career as a nationally acclaimed religious leader" (Brooks, 1988, p. 155). In her speech "How the Sisters are Hindered from Helping," she expressed the discontent of black women and proclaimed their 'burning zeal' to be coworkers with Baptist men in the Christian evangelization of the world (p. 155). A year later, 1901, the Women's Missionary League was recognized as the Women's Convention and Burroughs was elected corresponding secretary, a position she held from 1901-1947. She served as president from 1948 until her death in 1961. The motto of the Convention was "The World for Christ. Woman arise. He calleth for thee" (National Baptist Convention, 1900).

During the 1902 Women's Convention, Burroughs sought to fulfill her dream of starting a school, by recommending that they establish a national school which would prepare women and girls to work both here and in Africa, to teach Sunday school, and to give better domestic service.

Let us start a national school for girls here at home--not a Baptist school but one that all Negro women, of every creed, can work together on. We don't know what we can do until we all get together and try...It must be national, not Baptist--something all colored women can do for all colored girls. (Daniel, 1931, pp. 107, 114)

After several years of fund raising and coming to some compromise with the administration of the NBC, National Training School for Women and Girls opened on October 19, 1909 in Washington, DC with seven students, five teachers, and Burroughs as principal. By the end of the first year approximately thirty students were enrolled. Approximately 2000 women and girls from the states, Africa, and Caribbean had graduated by the mid-1900s. The National Training School was one of the few educational institutions which was established by a national organization of colored women, the only such institution that gained national scope and prominence almost wholly on contributions from the African American community, and was managed completely by African Americans (Daniels, 1931).

The school was known as the School of the Three B's--Bible, Bath, Broom which represented clean lives, clean bodies, and clean homes. A national institution in which we could preach every gospel, from that of soap and water, freely applied to the body, to that of the grace of God bounteously bestowed upon the soul, would hasten the dawn of a brighter day for us. (National Baptist Convention, 1902, p.28)

Thus, students were taught to work for social betterment and economic progress. Likewise, they developed a moral and spiritual stamina. The motto "We specialize in the wholly impossible," symbolizes the inclusion of practical and professional skills, vocational training, as well as religious and Bible training (Brooks, 1984).

The curriculum of the National Training School included courses such as domestic science and art, household administration and management, interior decorating, as well as secretarial skills and business courses. English, Spanish, world history, mathematics, general science, Christian missions, social service, public speaking, music, and African American history were also included in the curriculum. Burroughs believed these courses would prepare women and girls to become economically independent and would assist them in solving some of the societal problems they face everyday.

Via the curriculum and other activities at the National Training School, Burroughs sought to give respectability and dignity to vocational education (Brooks, 1984). In this sense she was supported industrial education. Thus, in some circles she was seen as the "female Booker T. Washington." Both Burroughs and Washington agreed "mind training" and "hand training" went together, yet she concentrated more on the economic plight of the masses: "Purely academic training neglects all of the powers of some minds, and some of the powers of all minds" (Brooks, 1984, p. 272). She felt many African Americans rejected the notion of hard work and common labor. To her, hard work and common labor taught "students accuracy, thoroughness, and industry and thereby equipped them with the fundamental strengths needed to succeed, namely, character, skilled service, and self-reliance" (Brooks, 1984, p. 272).

Within the context of educating the students, Burroughs sought to promote issues such as anti-lynching and women's suffrage. Burroughs work toward racial uplift and educational opportunity spanned to her work with the Association for the Study of African American Life and History, the National Association of Wage Earners, The International Council of Women of the Darker Race, and the National Association for Colored Women, among others. Throughout her life, Nannie Helen Burroughs emphasized the internal and spiritual qualities of African American women.

Anna Julia Cooper and Nannie Helen Burroughs exemplify the commitment to education of the whole person reflected in much of the work of African American women educators of the late 19th and early 20th century. Similar to others, their educational activities spanned the lifespan, serving both youth and adults, and were manifest both in their professional roles and their community service activities (Harley, 1982).

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WORK, LEARNING AND CUSTOMS IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE:  
EDUCATION AND WORK IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

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**ABSTRACT:** This paper discusses the connection between custom and self-education in early nineteenth century United States. The paper argues that the control of education was of fundamental concern to working people in the early labor movement.

Time, work and custom

In the first half of the nineteenth century, large scale changes in the economic and social structure of the United States began to gather momentum. Mass production began to become more common, especially in the textile industry where the factory first took hold. However, the factory system was far from being the most dominant form of production. Even by the 1840s a relatively small percentage of the populace engaged in factory-based work. But despite its small size, the factory system would have a profound impact on not only on the lives of those who worked within the walls of the factory, but on the lives of a much larger group of people for whom, as Roediger and Foner have noted, "...the factory gate became a symbol of the threats to their ideal of independent, diversified artisan and production."<sup>1</sup>

One of the most profound transformations this new mass production society brought about was the fundamental change in the relationship between time and work. From the perspective of the late twentieth century, it seems difficult to imagine a time when the clock did not structure work. However, as E. P. Thompson has demonstrated in the context of English working class history, the idea that the clock should be the means by which work should be timed and limited appeared quite foreign to a preindustrial society. In agricultural societies it was the seasons, hours of sunlight, and the weather that shaped the working day. The elements, along with the customs and traditions which grew up around them, resulted in work that was anything but routine. In practice this meant that there was variation in the working day and a variety of breaks, determined by custom and tradition, divided the day.

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Work was defined by the task, not by hours. Emerging capitalism with its expansion of markets and goods defined work less in task than in time. Thus the factory workers routine was not only determined by the clock, but time, which had once been in the domain of the worker, was now controlled by the employer.<sup>2</sup> It was this issue of time and the struggle over how much time an employer could demand from a worker that many of the early labor movement struggles centered on. Moreover, it was through education, a very specific type of education, that working people sought to fight the battle over who controls work and who controls learning.

### Self-education and really useful knowledge

The question of who controls knowledge and knowledge for whose interest was central to the early labor movement. By self-education workers meant education by and for the working class. Thus we find consistent and strong calls, throughout the early labor movement, for the creation of educational institutions and processes both formal and nonformal. Moreover, by self-education the early workers' movement meant what Richard Johnson has called "really useful knowledge." That is, knowledge concerned with power and education in the broad, liberal sense.<sup>3</sup>

Artisans, with their longstanding customs and traditions of independence and self-education felt threatened by the new tyranny of time. Working twelve hours or more in a factory with the pace of work set by a machine and under constant supervision of a boss, was a shock to those used to a different rhythm of work. It wasn't long before artisan intellectual activity began to ferment and develop active opposition to the control of time. If working people were going to receive an equitable share of the wealth produced by the new system and regain control of their own labor, they would have to provide their own education.

A key figure in the early movement was Thomas Heighon, who using the pseudonym "An Unlettered Mechanic," published a series of articles and pamphlets in the mid-1820's which argued that working people should establish new educational institutions and initiate new actions in which to secure their rights. Heighon argued that labor action and self-education where the only way that working people could save themselves from the encroaching poverty of the factory age. Indeed, Heighon's plan was predicated upon the education of the working class. He believed that a free press, dedicated to the interest of working people, needed to be established. In his speeches and writings he argued that worker self-education, education for and by working people, was the best means of meliorating the conditions of encroaching industrialization. Heighon

urged the establishment of workingmen's library with facilities for reading, lecturing, and debating. It was here that the workingmen could educate themselves and learn to speak on their own behalf. Heighton founded the Mechanics' Union of Trade Associations and the Mechanics' Free Press in Philadelphia to advance his cause.<sup>4</sup> However, Heighton realized that education was based on the acquisition of enough time to pursue knowledge. Thus a reduction in working hours was necessary in order to win further labor rights. Workers waged the "fight for sufficient leisure to attain the knowledge necessary to put universal suffrage to use."<sup>5</sup>

The issue of education was central in these early attempts to regain control of time and the workplace. Over and over the connection between self-education and control of workers' own lives was articulated. Education was probably the first and foremost political demand of most early labor organizations. In fact, the refrain "knowledge is power" echoed throughout the speeches and pamphlets of the time. Seth Luther, one of the most influential of the early radicals recognized this when he wrote:

"We now are prepared to show that a spirit of monopoly exists in this country... which is sapping and mining the very foundations of our free institutions. A state of society exists in this country which prevents the producing classes from a participation in the fountains of knowledge and the benefits designed for all"<sup>6</sup>

In Philadelphia, one newspaper reacted to the fear of a educated workers:

The peasant must labor during those hours of the day which his wealthy neighbor can give to abstract culture...; the mechanic cannot abandon the operation of his trade for general studies if he should...languor, poverty, discontent would soon be visible among all classes.<sup>7</sup>

Again and again early factory workers attempted to regain control of time by calling for reduced hours and increased educational opportunity. In Philadelphia a "system of General Education" was combined with a call for the reduction of hours worked in factories. The commitment of so many working artisan to education is best explained by the intricate connection made by journeymen between education, self-improvement, republicanism, and the right of labor to limit hours and to exercise intelligent control over its own time.<sup>8</sup> But the journeymen artisans whose way of life was threatened were not the only group to view self-education as a means to gain control of their lives. The movement

itself would be transformed by the involvement of the so-called "factory girls" of New England mill towns.

### Women of the mill

Industrialization, with its demand for cheap labor combined with a technology that achieved a high level of production, drew women and children into the factory. Textile mills of New England, most famously in Lowell, Massachusetts, hired exclusively women. Living in boarding houses surrounding the factories and under the supervision of "moral police," as the supervisors of the boarding houses were known, these women found themselves under radically different situations than the country life most were used to. Originally touted as a healthy alternative to the grinding poverty of life on the farm, the reality of factory life was very different. By the 1840s women participated so fully in the New England Workingmen's Association, (a very active labor reform organization) that the it changed its name to the Labor Reform Association."

A key figure among the women at the Lowell mills was Sarah Bagley. Coming to the mills with a farming background and a common school education, Bagly participated in a female study group, the Lowell improvement Circle, and wrote articles for the local paper, the Lowell Offering, supervised a night school, and became a leader in the Labor Reform Association. In her writings and activity, self-education and sisterhood became increasingly tied to labor's attempt to regain control over work. Learning became connected with, and indeed could not be separated from, modifying the work schedule. Dismissed from the Lowell Offering due to her militancy, she began writing for the Voice of Industry, a major voice for labor in general and the women in the mills in particular.

Through the Labor Reform Association, Bagly and others sponsored lectures, debates and discussions which sought to give voice to the women in the mills and spur active involvement in the movement for shorter hours. At the same time, the women consistently attacked prevailing notions of female education. Huldah J. Stone, a leader of the Association wrote:

Let those upstarts in Science, who take pride in denouncing the female mind as inferior to their own...remain forever silent...and shrink into their own native nothingness....<sup>10</sup>

The struggle by working women and men to regain some kind of control over their lives was often an uphill struggle more often than not meeting with failure rather than success. Nevertheless, this period established the position that the control of workers

time would be contested terrain. More importantly for our purposes, this period connected education (or self-education as it was most often called) to a social movement. That interconnectedness between education and social purpose was to remain a hallmark of a significant portion of the American labor movement.

### Conclusion

The study of adult education in pre or emerging industrial America may seem obscure and irrelevant in given the problems in today's world. However, paraphrasing E.P. Thompson, the industrial revolution and the social, economic, and demographic changes associated with it, resulted in the greatest transformation in history. The pressure from this transformation is now being felt throughout the rest of the nonindustrial world. Yet the "economic human" created by this industrial society threatens the very survival of the world. Thompson goes on to say:

As capitalism (or the market) made over human nature and human need, so political economy and its revolutionary antagonist came to suppose that this economic man was for all time. We stand at the end of century when this must now be called in doubt. We shall not ever return to pre-capitalist human nature, yet a reminder of its alternative needs, expectations and codes may renew our sense of our natures range of possibilities.<sup>11</sup>

It is that possibility, modest though it is, which provides the rationale for this historical inquiry in adult education.

### NOTES

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3. Richard Johnson, "'Really useful knowledge': Radical education and working class culture," in John Clarke et al., eds. Working class culture: Studies in history and theory (London: Hutchinson, 1979), 75-103. On artisan education see Fred M. Schied, Learning in social context: Adult and



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**Philosophy-in-Action in University Teaching**  
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**Abstract:** Eleven professors expressed traditional, humanist, and critical philosophies as they dialogued on the relationship between their philosophy of teaching and their practice in the classroom. Four categories emerged using grounded theory, axial coding methods.

One of the critical elements of adult education is reflecting on the nature of one's teaching practice. However, faculty and students who may often discuss their research projects rarely talk with each other about their teaching. Those who actually study adult education have dialogued about the relationship of instructional practice to philosophies of teaching during instructional methods or curriculum classes. This dialogue is an attempt to determine which philosophy or theory of curriculum best suits and reflects their disposition, nature, and explicit values. However, many teachers in university settings have little time or opportunity to dialogue or systematically reflect on the relationship between philosophy and teaching practice. Indeed, many come to university teaching appointments without any formal preparation in teaching.

A major assumption of this research is that one's philosophy drives one's teaching practice or, put another way, teaching constitutes "philosophy-in-action." (This is an adoption and adaptation of Christopher Hodgkinson's [1991] treatment of educational leadership as philosophy/values-in-action.) Philosophies are value-laden sets of assumptions that teachers often enact without much critical insight or reflection. And without those, there is little likelihood of enhancing or substantially changing one's ways of teaching. For example, critical reflection may make clearer the contradictions and inconsistencies in one's practice. More generally, studying the interplay of espoused philosophy and philosophy-in-use allows us to illuminate the complexities of teaching in higher education.

Various elements of a philosophy of teaching as well as the dominant theories-in-use were identified by means of a literature review. Five relevant perspectives seem to undergird higher education teaching: traditional mental discipline, behaviorist, andragogy, critical pedagogy and feminist pedagogy. Each perspective contains six major elements: philosophical orientation, assumptions about teaching and learning, a view of the learner, the role of the teacher, methods and strategies, and assessment and evaluation.

### **Methodology**

The research uses qualitative research theory and methods. The design involved selecting 14 professors in purposive sampling to represent a cross-section of espoused philosophies as well as some diversity of disciplines and faculties. A large Canadian university in western Canada is the site for the study. Two ads were

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\* Thanks to Dr. Paula Brook, Research Director for University Teaching Services, for her contribution throughout this project.

placed in the campus newspaper in the summer, 1992, soliciting volunteers for the project. Invitational letters were sent to a list generated by reputation and from Women's Studies networks. Nineteen professors responded to the call, one was selected for piloting a protocol of questions which was added to 13 who were finally included in the study. Eleven participants' data are included in this report.

There were eight women and three men in the sample group. Six teach in Education programs, four teach in Arts and Fine Arts programs, and one in a Home Economics. Five were new professors with less than 4 years in the academy; two had just received tenure and four had taught in the University for 10 - 20 or more years. They taught in a range of class size from large 2 - 400 persons in typical lecture auditoriums to small 6 person seminars around tables and chairs. The average class size was about 25 students who sat in desks. Two of the instructors held primarily traditional philosophies of teaching; three were humanists; two were humanist/critical; and four were critical. These last four included two professors who considered themselves feminist pedagogues. Because of the similarity in their assumptions and aims for students they were grouped with the criticals. The primary difference is the feminists focused on the oppression of women in society.

Participants each were interviewed twice in one-hour interviews before and after the researchers observed his/her class. The purpose of the first interview was to gather general information about their pedagogy. In the course of the semi-structured interview, instructors provided us with what they did in the classroom, why they did it, and whether it produced the effects they desired. The second interview used the observation class field notes and the transcript of the first interview to verify, embellish, and probe more deeply into their pedagogy. At times, contradictions were also identified and reviewed. All transcripts were transcribed verbatim by the researchers themselves. A technique of conversational interviewing was employed that included dialogue on the meaning each participant attempted to give to his/her practice.

A grounded theory approach using methods of Corbin and Strauss (1990) involved open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. Open coding involved placing units of analysis from each person's two transcripts and observation field notes into a matrix table labelled with their names on the horizontal axis and the dimensions of a philosophy of teaching on the vertical axis, i.e., assumptions of teaching, view of the learner, role of the teacher, methods and strategies, evaluation, constraints and resistances. As open coding proceeded, alternating back and forth across the participants' data generated hunches, themes, or subcategories. This intuitive and dynamic movement between inductive and deductive analysis facilitated axial coding. In axial coding, Corbin and Strauss advocate a "paradigm model" which includes placing subcategories in the following sequence: A) Causal conditions → B) Phenomenon (category) → C) Context → D) Intervening conditions → E) Action/Interaction strategies → F) Consequences (Corbin & Strauss, p. 99). Thinking systematically about data using this model, a phenomenon can emerge that relates logically to its subcategories and includes a set of dimensions and properties. Finally, selective coding involved identifying the core category or central phenomenon of the study.

## Findings

To date, four categories or phenomena emerged from this research on Philosophy-in-Action: 1) Expert vs. Co-learner; 2) Relationship of comfort to critique; 3) Learning for change; 4) Coping with constraints. The phenomenon of expert vs. co-learner is supported through descriptions primarily of participants' role as teacher. Traditional instructors assume that their mandate is to discern what literature is important for students as well as make available the vast resources in the university setting. One traditional stated flatly, "The teacher is qualitatively superior to students. Students are not equal."

Most of the instructors in this study, however, felt that the university instructor had some expertise and more knowledge of the content than their students, but many respected the life experience and knowledge that the student brought to the classroom. They saw their relationship as complementary as in the comment, "I learn from them as much as they learn from me." One labeled himself, "a co-learner with additional resources." In the context of the university, these instructors recognize that they hold the authority in the classroom and have power to grant grades from a traditional institution that bestows authority to the professor. However, the intervening conditions are that the majority of these professors are new and dispute the notion imposed by the university that teachers have greater power in the system. This is supported by such statements as "I share power with students," or "the students have a right to know instructor's stances." To reach their goals of student growth, they understand they have to "equalize the power relations in the classroom." The strategies they employ indicate that they "struggle with" their students as they "tolerate ambiguity." They become "collaborative learners" with their students. Many encourage small group work or "group dialogue which supports the value of partnership" in the classroom. Grading is handled through "rough drafts" that are submitted to show progress with immediate feedback. There is "contracting for marks" with "clear criteria" for assessment. Several instructors "create the questions for the exams" with their students. One "problematized grading to show the power relations in the classroom."

However, the consequences of struggling with the grading system are tension and emotional reaction to these instructors' teaching. Some question their own ability to critique or the superiority of their own knowledge in the final analysis. There is pain and struggle attached to grading. Many of these instructors "hate it" since it imposes a hierarchy of excellence within classrooms which they have attempted to run collectively. Thus, instructors feel they are forced to live with a partially resolved dilemma. They hold in dialectical relationship two opposing forces: the co-learner stance they assumed in the classroom with the expert stance bestowed on them by the university which gave them the power to grant grades. This should not be underestimated at a time when employers are dipping into potential employees' transcripts to make final hiring decisions. Being aware of employers' criteria for selection of employees and the university's "buying into" that criteria, forced some of these instructors to talk about the university being industry driven as opposed to promoting "a place of inquiry, for controversy."



Particularly the critical educators saw the contradiction between what society at large assumed and what they considered to be important about education.

The second phenomenon or category that emerged from this study of philosophy-in-action is the relationship of comfort to critique. The dimensions of comfort involved creating a caring, cohesive, and friendly environment while at the same time fostering critique. Cookies and coffee were observed in one classroom while a collaborative, collective sense permeated most classes. Because they can control both the comfort level and the nature of the critique in their classrooms, instructors who want to foster critical thinking and critical social and personal analysis believe that there must be comfort for critique. They speak of being "playful," making the classes "fun." However, most believed that a "successful class is both friendly and critical." Instructors talked about "destabilizing students," "challenging established ideas," looking with "a critical eye" at issues, and learning to accept constructive criticism. One understood that she could only "critique from a base of support" while another through her content attempts to relate the emotional with the intellectual which requires a democratic, flexible classroom. The strategies these instructors employ range from encouraging well-formed, objective and logical questions in large classrooms in an attempt to "separate the person from the concept" to consciousness raising and "critical reflection on society's messages." For the feminist and critical educators in this group, the idea of disorientation was essential for growth. They encouraged critical essays using claims substantiated by arguments, journal writing, dialogue on issues that challenge existing assumptions as these become the "catalyst for new ideas which lead to new ideas. . ." and so on. There is an assumption by the criticals and humanists in this phenomenon that the learner is self-directing, able to reflect, will achieve, come to their own insights, and are interested in learning. The consequences of setting up classrooms for critique is that students are able to articulate alternative points of view, become better writers, are able to question taken-for-granted assertions, are not overwhelmed by ideas in print, are able to be creative and thoughtful, and have developed reflection skills.

The third phenomenon is learning for the purpose of change. Change means primarily personal change but for the critical theorists it also means transformation for the purpose of social change. The humanists believed that the purpose of classroom learning was to change the student in some way. Some hoped they would be more critical, make ideological changes which takes time, or would grow beyond where they presently are. The traditional instructors saw students assimilating information or recognizing alternative points of view. Those with critical perspectives saw the relationship between students' personal history and the oppression they felt from society's messages. They assume that students are "socialized to absorb unquestioned oppressive notions. . .not to critique things." Instructors used nudging, pushing, "struggling with," and "taking risks together" in emotional exposure to encourage transformation. The strategies they use are "mind blowing literature chosen to move beyond academic analysis" or "literature about oppression." The content of the literature helps students problematize their own experiences. Thus, the most important strategy to reach this goal is one of dialogue, not lecture, in small classrooms, although one feminist, constrained by a large

lecture theatre, hopes her content will suggest new perspectives to at least a few students.

Journal writing also encourages reflection. It is here that students' assumptions, values, and beliefs are challenged. When (learning) journals are assigned for marks, points are given for writing the journal and only supportive comments given if it is read. One mentioned that she required a reading log instead of the actual journal which involved turning in one page summaries of the journal twice in the semester and was evaluated for "passion, voice, and commitment." Consequently, humanists want students' ideas challenged as they grow while traditional instructors are content with shaped behavior which shows more rigorous logical and abstract thinking. The critical educators, however, aim for students to come to their own insights about oppression in family and society, to label the power dynamics in their lives, and to be aware of the contradictions and struggles in society.

The last phenomenon that these instructors discussed involved coping with the constraints of the system. Those who taught large classrooms recognized the difficulty of using anything but multiple choice, true-false exams because of the time constraint. They recognized it is difficult to assess critical thinking or analysis in objective, "retention and recall" exams. "There's a contradiction in that in a class of 400 the testing procedure doesn't allow you to test for that which you most hope you are achieving."

Those who believed dialogue promoted transformation thought 50 minute classes were too short to get into any depth. The scheduling of core courses against electives or insensitivity to adult schedules, as in drama students who stay up late rehearsing but who must be in class at 9:00 am, also were mentioned. Instructors felt that students themselves expect lecture to gain information in class. When the instructor promotes dialogue and clarity on personal worldviews, students seem, at first hesitant. Whether this contributes to the lack of feedback (negative or positive) from students except in their course evaluations that instructors mentioned is unclear. Often instructors voiced frustration about the lack of feedback. "The classroom is like a sound room." "You put it out but you don't know what you're getting." The whole issue of feedback included an isolation from their colleagues which fostered loneliness. In particular there was no meaningful dialogue on the pedagogy of one's teaching.

The ways instructors dealt with these constraints was varied. Some adapted to students' expectations by becoming more structured at the beginning of the term with class outlines and more lecture. However, toward the end they had achieved a participatory curriculum. Some talked about the need to be flexible, to trust in their intuition and to take advantage of "the learning moment." One talked about "flying by the seat of my pants" as she followed her hunches and the leads of students. All advocated smaller classrooms as valuable in achieving their goals. Even those in large lectures maintained it would help to break the group into smaller seminar groups to dialogue on the content. Even in mid-sized classrooms, breaking into "family groups" or study groups are ways these instructors promoted dialogue.

## Conclusions

The story line of this research on the relationship of one's philosophy to one's practice, is one of negotiation between what one assumes and believes to be true about education and the contextual factors (students, institution, and societal assumptions and beliefs) which serve as enablers or constrainers to playing out these assumptions and beliefs. Often these contextual factors and intervening conditions (the preponderance of new or newly tenured staff in this study) create conflict for instructors.

The research shows that one's philosophy of teaching influences the methods and strategies used in the classroom. Desired outcomes of teaching are defined differently depending on the philosophy that one holds. This study showed a continuum of professors who defined their role as expert, on the one extreme, and those who consider themselves co-learners and collaborative on the other extreme. Those who felt qualitatively superior to students felt few constraints from the system and were satisfied with acquisition of knowledge as an outcome. Those who viewed students as experts in life experiences, but not necessarily in the subject matter at hand, wanted to promote personal growth, changed attitudes, assumptions or beliefs as students progressed through their discipline. Those professors who professed a critical pedagogy, aimed to transform their students for the purpose of changing societal structures, policies, and practices in their chosen field. These instructors felt the most alienated and experienced the most contradictions from the dominant pedagogical practices espoused in the university. According to this group, at a time when the university is increasingly employment-driven and job-oriented rather than a place of inquiry or controversy, professors must live with the consequences of their pedagogy: isolation, labeling (e.g., the "Fem Police"), and uncertainty. Thus, they are forced to transcend dialectical opposing forces to form a synthesis of new methods and strategies by which they can live.

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AFRICAN AMERICAN LEARNING-TO-LEARN-TO-LIVE IN RESPONSE TO  
DISEUCATION: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION

by

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Abstract: The purpose of this research was to investigate the observed behaviors of successful African Americans and determine their patterns of learning. The "learning-to-learn-to-live" concept explained this pattern.



#### PURPOSE:

The purpose of this research was to investigate the observed behaviors of successful, professional African Americans who appeared to be in control of their lives and had the ability to critically analyze life events. How did they become empowered? Where did they learn this critical stance on life? Did uncritically accepted learning-to-learn concepts in adult education apply to African-American adults?

#### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK:

Affective and cognitive systems are developed in response to demands of life situations. For African Americans, the pressure is greater since survival is at issue. The African-American culture teaches an Afrocentric way of living and thinking thus developing an Afrocentric eye. When children enter school, they are forced to develop and continually use an Eurocentric eye.

Accordingly, African Americans' experiences prepare them to adapt to the duality of being an African and an European American within a largely Eurocentric culture. This two-ness is well documented in the literature. The experiences influence the development of a unique pattern of learning and a critical disposition or consciousness that promote strategies fostering radical empowerment. Afrocentricity is defined as felt experience at the deepest level of psychic experience, as a total involvement in experience, and as a spiritualistic transcendence in experience (Baldwin, 1981). If these strategies are not learned, diseducation results.

Woodson's (1933) reference to the miseducation of the Negro referred to content; diseducation refers to process. Diseducation is the disassociation of the knowers from what is known, from their natural reasoning and learning processes and the ways of knowing that African Americans possess when they enter formal educational situations. The African American preferred way of learning is simultaneous, holistic, descriptive-analytical and relational in nature whereas the European American preferred way of learning is successive, analytical and linear (Cohen, 1969; Hale-Benson, 1987; Shade, 1982).

The structure of a person's existing knowledge is regarded as the crucial factor influencing new learning, retention, and problem-solving (Ausabel, 1963). Only so far is it possible to "enhance the organizational strength is it possible to enhance the functional retention of new subject matter, both as an end in itself and for purposes of problem-solving" (p. 76). But in diseducation, persons are distanced or disassociated from their preferred patterns of knowledge structures creating problems. My research seeks to answer how some African Americans avoid this diseducation and succeed in spite of the system.

#### METHOD (S):

First, a phenomenological approach was used to investigate the phenomenon of African-American patterns of learning and resulting learning-to-learn-to-live strategies. Phenomenological methodology allowed interviews of 20 successful African Americans exhibiting empowering behavior to provide accumulated awarenesses

so that themes could be elicited from their interpretations. Second, a critical analysis of the literature on adult and psychological learning theories and Afrocentric philosophy was conducted.

#### RESULTS:

My research identifies LENS (Learning Everyday Negotiating Strategies). LENS builds on Miller's (1914) binocular vision and DuBois's (1903) double consciousness. This formulation comes directly from the interviews. It accurately reflects how these African Americans learned everyday negotiating strategies to survive. LENS reflects African Americans' dual vision which comes from operating with two ways of knowing--an African American and an European American within a largely Eurocentric culture. LENS serves as a perceptual filter through which our world is viewed and structured. This dualism provides a keen awareness that permits us to examine, evaluate, and interpret situations critically and quickly. The constant shifting between the two cultures creates a shrewd sense of skill and precision in perceiving the two worlds in-depth, both singly and jointly. Many times it becomes critical that African Americans hold and utilize the worldviews--African American and European American. At that moment, African Americans must be able to accurately, in computer terms, switch windows. That is having two documents in full view simultaneously, reading the two documents to form yet a new document. Or it may be that it is only the acceptance that the two pieces of information coexist. LENS allows us to adjust the tension or contradictions between the two visions. To the degree that one lives in an overtly and covertly racist and oppressive system, most African Americans will have developed LENS.

#### PATTERNS OF LEARNING

Three themes which emerged from the interview data: (1) learning with the whole mind, (2) living the experience through experiential learning, (3) creativity through transcendence. African Americans' two ways of knowing may account for these patterns. The learning-to-learn concept was found not to explain the phenomena. Findings of this study did support a learning-to-learn-to-live concept which explained the strategies African Americans must develop if they are to be successful in a Eurocentric environment.

Learning with the whole mind is the fusion of, or bringing together of, the affective, experiential and cognitive elements in the learning process (Brown, 1974; Rogers, 1976). This fusion is especially congruent with characteristics of the African American culture. The concept of learning with the whole mind indicates that African-Americans use affective and cognitive domains complementarily in learning episodes.

Hunt (1974) proposed that the African American's way of knowing encompasses neither the elevation of the cognitive nor the affective but the recognition and acceptance of the strengths of both domains. What is being affirmed is that the basic definition of African-American culture and behavior is rooted in traditional West African culture. For example, Dixon (1976) described the way

African Americans think in the following way:

[African Americans] know reality predominately through the interaction of affect and symbolic imagery . . . Affect refers to the feeling self, the emotive self engaged in experiencing phenomena holistically . . . Affect personalizes the phenomenal world. It is one factor in the Africanized mode of knowing. Affect, however, is not intuition, for the latter terms means direct or immediate knowledge (instinctive knowledge). Affective is not regarded here as irrational or intuitive without resources or inference from or reasoning about evidence. Affect does interact with evidence, evidence in the form of symbolic imagery. (p. 70)

The second theme was living the experience through experiential learning. Living the whole experience is the holistic, active engagement which incorporates both abstract and concrete experiences in all facets of learning. Living the experience is lived experience through experiential learning. It involves the active-holistic engagement of the whole mind which involves intuitive, affective, and cognitive abilities. Living the experience fosters a divergent notion of action inquiry. It is reflective action which scrutinizes experience against self and other sources in order to remove distortions or flaws from the learning experiences. It allows for the interaction of the untouched boundaries of one's self and the experience that one is living through.

This second theme had three subthemes: mother wit (learning), direct experience and reflection. Learning is grounded in "mother wit" and described as a contextualized, practical understanding of the subject at hand and its relation to the individual self and the world. Direct experience acknowledges and prefers previous experience of the individual and the direct experience of others as legitimate knowledge. In the African-American culture, there is no substitute for actual experience gained in the course of living. The natural facts, eternal truths, wisdom of the ages and basic precepts of survival emerge from the experiences of life. African Americans measure knowledge and decision-making against their own self-knowledge. This analysis is in line with Rogers (1969) and Kolb (1984).

The third theme elicited was creativity through transcendence. Creativity through transcendence is characterized as a process of perceptual reorganization. Spirituality and Black aesthetics both characterize and shape the creative product and process of creativity through transcendence. Three subthemes which emerged were affect, spiritual preconscious and self-reflection. Transcendence is relevant for African Americans because it has been identified as one of the styles of responding to and manipulating their reality which has its roots in African beingness.

The general ideas of transcendence is moving beyond or rising above the predetermined limits or conditions of an experience or situation. It is an uncanny sense of wholeness, pattern seeing and synthesis. Data and logic are increased and embellished by hunches, feelings, insights and a nonlinear sense

of patterning. It is a way to see beyond the surface structure of the experience to create new insights, new ideas which will provide new possibilities and new explanations for old problems. It is engaging in mental metamorphosis or reorganization or restructuring of existing mental structures to create new meaning. It is the ability to see the infinite relationships between totally unrelated information and make a fit that makes sense once conceived. It is a way of fusing the impossible with the possible and creating a revolutionary idea. This analysis is in line with Vaughn (1980) and Berne (1977).

#### LEARNING-TO-LEARN-TO-LIVE

The learning-to-learn concept has recently become a standard concept proposed in adult learning. This process is said to be as important as content in a rapidly changing information rich environment. The research on learning-to-learn has been one of techniques and as such, appeals to objectivity as being equally applicable to all. Learning-to-learn is critiqued in this research because it lacks content and does not explain the development of critical consciousness for African Americans.

The learning-to-learn concept was rejected for African Americans and a learning-to-learn-to-live concept was offered to explain the strategies African Americans must develop if they are to be successful in a Eurocentric environment. Learning-to-learn-to-live is required for African Americans to make sense of the world. It is conceptualized with direct application for purpose and relevance and is value-driven from actual life experiences.

The learning-to-learn-to-live theory consists of the following components: (1) practical, goal-oriented inquiry, (2) experiential encounter or hermeneutical understanding with all of experiences, and (3) development of independence and interdependence for oneself as an individual and as a group member.

Moving through these components creates a dialectical process that includes introspection, retrospection, self-reflection and invention of new knowledge. Accordingly, learning-to-learn-to-live is defined here as one's common sense tracer or tracker that actively, affectively, preconsciously, and cognitively guides, one simultaneously, step-by-step and holistically, through the process one takes in determining the patterns of relevant connections and in attaching meaning to one's life experiences.

Moreover, this common sense tracer or tracker permits individuals: to critically examine personal perceptions, conceptions and meanings; to dig to the core of knowledge gained from experience and question why; to avoid the problem of acceptance without comparing and analyzing the reasons that affect their individual lives; to gain awareness of hidden meanings and agendas that are found in their daily lives; to make rational choices which are beneficial to their own causes.

Learning-to-learn-to-live in the African-American community reflects a holistic view of learning that incorporates the affective and cognitive domain in learning. Learning is grounded in the value-driven, purposeful situations of African-American



life. Learning-to-learn-to-live is a radical process of Black survival. Learning-to-learn-to-live is viewed through the LENS.

#### EDUCATIONAL IMPORTANCE OF THE RESEARCH:

This research adds to the literature on adult learning-to-learn theory. It adds to the literature on African-American adult education. Past literature on African-American patterns of learning perpetuates the deficit models. This research transcends those stereotypical paradigms and focuses on the rich successful strategies present in the African-American community.

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From Workfare to Edfare:  
An Africentric Feminist Epistemology  
of Welfare, Education, and Work

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**Abstract:** This study offers: 1) a conceptual analysis of "marginalization," and Africentric feminism; and 2) provides a critique of African-American women's experiences with the welfare program, and the corresponding relationship of education to work.

Preface

This study grew out of my "lived experiences" with the welfare system as a child and as an adult with a college degree. I believe these experiences helped me report the experiences of those who are currently affected by the welfare system. Furthermore, I believe that it was these experiences which gave me insight into the problems/issues that I might not have explored otherwise. Collins (1990, p. 311) purports that,

For ordinary African-American women, those individuals who have lived through the experiences about which they claim to be experts are more believable and credible than those who have merely read or thought about such experiences. Thus, concrete experience as a criterion for credibility frequently is invoked by Black women when making knowledge claims.

As an African-American woman researcher convicted by not only my role as a black woman and researcher, but as someone who has lived these experiences, I began an exploration into the lives of those who are currently receiving public assistance. In so doing, I also relived their pain, their frustration, and their intense search for self-determination.

**Introduction**

The Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program was established under the Social Security Act of 1935 to provide aid to widows, orphans, and children as a result of death or mental illness to a spouse or parent. This welfare program has spawned many debates, the most recent of which concerns the Title II-Job Opportunities for Basic Skills (JOBS) under the Family Support Act (FSA) 1988. This Act gave states the right to mandate education and workfare for women receiving public assistance.

### **Purpose**

It was my contention that even though the intent of the JOBS program was to help all women become economically independent, it did not. Instead, it perpetuated their marginalization within American society because it failed to adequately address issues related to their histories, their work ethic, and a corresponding understanding of the relationship of education and work for women, particularly African American women.

Although the focus of this study was on African-American women, many of the issues affecting them also affect other women of color and men as well. While this was true, I believed that as an African-American woman concerned about the lived experiences of other African-American women living in poverty, that the focus of this study should be on them.

### **The Marginalization of African American Women on Welfare**

Concerns of African-American women in America have often been framed by liberation issues, poverty issues, or racial issues. Their needs and concerns have rarely been portrayed in terms of their own strengths. African-American women have been portrayed as domineering and as overshadowing their African-American male counterparts in various aspects of life. Some critics have stated that this contributed to the deterioration of the family unit. These factors have contributed to their marginalization. Hence policies and laws affecting them have perpetuated rather than ameliorated their marginalization in the welfare system, in the educational system, and more importantly in the workforce.

Although the term "marginalization" has been widely used by many adult educators (Clark, 1958; Devlin, 1982), it is not easily defined. Its derivative has been defined in several dictionary sources as being "on the edge", at "the limits," or the "border." The Webster New World Dictionary: Third College Edition (1988) defines it as the act of exclusion, "by relegating to the outer edge of a group or by diverting the public's attention to something else." While these definitions supply us with a rudimentary understanding of the term, they do not describe the psycho-emotional, political, and economic ramifications that this term has on those who are forced to live on the so-called "margins of society."

The difference between these definitions and the one used in this study, was that the former did not address the issue of **choice**. To be in the margins does

not deny conscious choice. People can choose to live in the margins. Although some people, choose to live in the margins, many others are not there by their own volition.

The women that I spoke to did not make a conscious decision to become marginalized, initially. While many chose to receive welfare benefits in order to survive, others chose to receive welfare benefits because they believed that it would provide them with an opportunity to provide a nurturing home environment for their families. Therefore, the act of receiving public assistance is not the cause of their marginalization. Their marginalization occurred as a result of the hegemonic control of the prevailing dominant group. In this case the laws, those who engaged in the discourse and wrote the laws, and those who enacted or enforced them were the dominant group. This group determined what knowledge, whose ideas, and which group of people were the "legitimate ones." Their ideas often get transmitted through the media, literature, and other technologies developed to transfer information.

In this study, I referred to those who dominated by maintaining power and control over the discourse concerning the legislation of welfare reform as the "center". Those whose ideas and thoughts were marginal to the discourse (not by choice) were referred to as the "marginalized." The term marginalization in this study referred to the silencing of women receiving welfare assistance through the construction of legislation by the dominant culture which "commatized" them while negating their political, economic, and historical claims to social justice.

#### **Methodology**

The analysis rested on a legislative history (Folsum, 1972) of the Title II-JOBS program, an Africentric feminist epistemology (Collins, 1990), and grounded theory (Glasser and Strauss, 1968). This study examined stakeholder perceptions of the AFDC program in order to develop themes related to the efficacy of education as a solution to welfare programs. The theoretical framework of the study involved an analysis of the contextual factors impacting African-American women's experiences with "edfare" and their own perceptions of the system and its consequences.

Although the data was triangulated, using several methodologies (Marshall and Rossman, 1989), it was the Africentric feminist epistemology that communicated an "oppositional world view" which was essential to



understanding the women's experiences relative to the welfare system. An Africentric feminist epistemology falls within the tradition of critical theory. It is a way of viewing oppression and power relations along gender and racial lines. "Our survival depended on an ongoing public awareness of the separation between margin and center and an ongoing private acknowledgement that we were a necessary, vital part of the whole," said Hooks (1984, p. ix). "This sense of wholeness, impressed upon our consciousness by the structure of our daily lives," she added, "provided us an oppositional **world view** (emphasis added) --a mode of seeing unknown to most of our oppressors, that sustained us, aided us in our struggle to transcend poverty and despair, strengthened our sense of self and solidarity" (p.ix).

It was the Africentric feminist epistemology which allowed me to acknowledge the impact of social class, and of historical and political hegemony on gender and racial oppression for women receiving public assistance. It is grounded in two epistemological and two axiological assumptions: (a) concrete experience is used as a criterion of meaning; (b) dialogue is the basis for assessing knowledge claims; (c) an ethic of caring, emphasizing the uniqueness of individuals, elicits appropriate emotion, and recognizes empathetic understanding; (d) an ethic of personal accountability. This paradigm allowed me to speak, to hear, and to write the story of those involved with the JOBS program.

The legislative history was conducted to provide some insight into the world view of those who wrote, interpreted, and enacted the laws that impacted the lives of those receiving public assistance.

The transcribed interviews and legislative testimonies were coded, and analyzed. Once this was completed themes were extracted from the data.

#### Data Source

The primary data was obtained through a series of interviews conducted with 36 people: African-American women receiving welfare, community advocates, Project Chance specialists, and Illinois State Board of Education Information Recruitment and Retention workers. These interviews were conducted over a three month period in public schools and community college

offices, public aid offices, and in the homes of those receiving public assistance. All were conducted in the northern region of Illinois. In order to get a cross sampling of individuals, urban, rural and suburban

sites were selected.

Legislative testimonies and hearings conducted between February 1986 and the signing of the Family Support Act into law on October 13, 1988 were reviewed and analyzed.

#### **Themes and Conclusion**

Nine themes emerged from the data collected from the interviews and the legislative hearings. Although each of these themes appears to be separate and distinct, they are not. They are intertwined and interwoven. They are variations on the same theme -- the quest and the right to determine and to choose one's own destiny. As long as these women are: (a) denied the right to choose; (b) denied access to equal pay, jobs, and benefits; (c) denied educational opportunities and job training of their choice; (d) discriminated against because of gender and race; and (e) not included in the legislative discourse regarding issues that affect them, the lives of their children, and their significant other(s), they will continue to be marginalized. It is not enough to include women in the discourse at the federal level if their issues are not going to be addressed at the administrative and programmatic levels as well.

Themes emerging from the legislative discourse were: (1) from workfare to edfare represented a sentiment to assist women "get off" welfare through educational opportunities and "work"; (2) production not reproduction is the question linked the concerns of middle class women and women in poverty; (3) for thine ownself be responsible stressed work as a moral obligation; and (4) welfare, to be or not to be, called for dismantling the welfare system to decrease poverty and welfare dependence.

Themes emerging from the marginalized were: (1) elusive quest for self-determination represented the journey that women embarked upon to end welfare dependence; (2) the irrational bureaucracy produced bureaucratic inconsistencies and the quest became more elusive because of inadequate funding; (3) the friendly face of IDPA depicted the face of "the many" which became the single voice and face of the "agency;" (4) gatekeepers of the illusion provided inadequate funding which determined services and people's possibilities; and (5) it's a race thang" negated African-American women's race and femininity.

This study concluded that Title II of the FSA-- JOBS plan marginalized the concerns of African-American women. It failed to address their historical contributions to the workforce and their families.

From workfare to edfare was and is an elusive quest for self-determination. In fact, it is another name, another program to demonstrate how untractable a problem women on welfare are despite attempts made by the government to assist them in ending their welfare dependency. Those living in poverty, as well as those who serve as their advocates (e.g. social workers, adult educators) must recognize that education to work is not merely enough. An Africentric feminist epistemology helps us understand that the issue of poverty for all Americans will only end when all those living in poverty rise up and challenge the factors of racism, sexism, political hegemony, and social control which contributes to their impoverished conditions in America. Unless educators began to include a discourse to address these factors, the institution of education will continue to fail in its mission to educate a literate workforce.

(\*Excerpts taken from unpublished dissertation, "From Workfare to Edfare, African-American Women and The Elusive Quest for Self-Determination")

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# Educational Scholarship on Women: A Feminist Analysis of Two Decades of Adult Education Literature

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## ABSTRACT

Research on women and adult education (AE) remains at low levels, with little evidence of a feminist perspective guiding it. This two-part study explores the need to develop this body of knowledge.

## INTRODUCTION

While some academic fields have enjoyed a feminist analysis of their respective paradigms and practices, others have had little such scholarship focused at it. This study examined recent efforts at including inquiry on women in the AE literature as a means of further focusing the research and knowledge base of the field. Part 1 of the study analyzed the level and content of scholarship on women. This was followed by a review of research articles on women using a definition of feminist scholarship which was developed for this study.

## BACKGROUND

The field of adult education has been informed by previous analyses of its body of literature, but with the exception of Hayes and Smith (1990), few studies have looked at the literature pertaining to women. Following the inspiration of a study by DuBois, et. al. (1987), Hayes and Smith investigated eight sources of literature from 1966 to 1988. While they found an increase in scholarship on women over a 23-year period, it was slight, with journal articles increasing from 2.4% to 5.1%. Small increases in women as subjects in conference proceedings and dissertations were also evident. Though a substantial increase in women as authors was discerned over that period, little evidence of the integration of feminist perspectives was found.

The research by Hayes and Smith provides a helpful background for further analysis of the literature, however in purposefully limiting their study from actually defining feminist research and addressing whether or not the studies they found on women were of a feminist nature, their research falls short of a full-fledged feminist critique, which is to consider how women are studied, for what purposes, and under what assumptions.

## METHODOLOGY

The ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center) database was used as the population source from which research on AE and women was located. Only journal articles were selected from ERIC for inclusion, since they are peer reviewed, published, and considered authoritative. A combination of five words was used in step one of the search: adult education, adult literacy, adult development, adult educators, or adult learning. To modify the search, the words women, females, feminism and gender were employed.

Using this search strategy, 193 journal articles were located and analyzed. Twenty-seven of the articles were



then randomly selected for review. Based on a concept of feminist scholarship developed for this study, articles were critiqued for their perspective, feminist or otherwise.

#### **RESULTS: PART 1**

Only a small percentage of published AE research was found to be on women. The highest percentage of journal articles on AE and women was 7.7% in 1985; the mean percentage of articles over the twenty year period was 4.3%.

The most frequent topic for research on women was adult development(25%). International development, higher education, and human resource development were the next most frequently researched topics. These four topics made up over 50% of all journal articles on AE and women.

Women were two-thirds of the authors undertaking research in which women are subjects. While females have their research interests in a variety of subjects, males focused predominantly on adult development. The next highest category for male authors was higher education, followed by human resource development and learning. Most frequent topics for women were international development, human resource development, higher education, and empowerment.

When sorted by publication name, it was found that the 193 articles were contained in 109 separate journals. Only five journals carried more than 3 articles about women and AE in two decades of time. Convergence contained fifteen articles, and International Journal of Aging and Human Development held twelve. Lifelong Learning, which is no longer being produced, came in third with nine articles.

#### **RESULTS: PART 2**

In order to provide a feminist critique of the literature, it was first necessary to explore and define feminist thought as it relates to AE. A brief discussion in this regard is offered below, followed by the definition of feminist scholarship which was created for the analysis.

The study of gender issues in all of education has tended to be practice or policy related, rather than theory related. DuBois et.al.(1987) observed that feminist educators have focused almost exclusively on institutions of education. In AE as well, most gender-focused research has addressed how women are discriminated against (Rice and Meyer,1989), rather than on how they can be liberated through education. Addressing AE as an oppressive institution is problematic however, for AE is not one thing, but many. Hence, a feminist analysis of "the institution" of AE, or any aspect of it, including practice, policy development and research, needs to encompass many concerns.

A feminist analysis of AE would need to include the study of gender and its social construction, and a critical analysis of the unequal power relations between genders, while also confronting important class, race, culture, sexual identity and situation-specific variables that affect these relationships(MacKinnon,1981). While individual women would be of central importance in this analysis, by considering their collective lives it would reveal women as

part of a secondary social class, regardless on which level the individual resided (Wittig, in de Lauretis, 1990).

The feminist critique in AE would also assume that knowledge is not simply for knowledge sake, but for positive, progressive change in women's lives. This action orientation challenges the concept of neutrality in research and practice, placing it within the context of an inherently political atmosphere, whether that be the academy, the community, the family or the self (Weber Cannon, 1990).

Based on these concepts, the following definition was developed and used for analyzing research on women:

**"A critique of gender relations and the meaningful variables of class, race, age, culture, sexual identity and educational experience that impact on those relations as they exist in the learning milieu, in combination with an analysis of the forces that construct or reinforce those relations, while paying particular attention to both the individual and collective woman, in the context of knower, learner, teacher and/or researcher, for the purposes of agency or action in the educational setting."**

The 27 articles selected represented a range of scholarship; qualitative, descriptive, philosophical and quantitative methods of inquiry. They also represented the range of perspectives on what it means to include women as a focus in research. Nineteen of the papers studied woman as the primary subject, while the other eight considered women as only a variable for the study. While showing an interest in women as a topic of study, the eight "variable" papers did little to advance the feminist perspective (Couchman and Peck, 1988; Cooper et.al, 1981; Havighurst, 1983; Khan, 1986; Nomura, 1982; Seltzer, 1989; Tran, 1988; Zagar et.al, 1984) and will not be addressed in this brief format.

Of the nineteen journal articles in the "primary" category, seven were found to be exemplary examples of feminist scholarship, eight articles offered meaningful information about gender issues without encompassing the full dimensions of the feminist analysis, and the remainder provided no feminist analysis. One of these was Spivey and Scherman's (1980) study which provides nothing of context which connects their data to the experience of specific groups of women. Similarly, a study on the midlife crises that female teachers undergo is undertaken by Crow (1987), yet with no analysis as to the structural factors in the teaching field which might precipitate crises of this type. Ntiri (1979) makes the same omission as do Lee and Haggard (1985), in their article on women farmers.

The next 8 articles in this "primary" group apply feminist literature and perspectives to their work, yet do not fully integrate all aspects of the feminist analysis. For example, Ellicott's (1985) work on psychosocial changes as tied to childbearing and family-centered tasks mentions no class or race based approach, and two other articles on adult development (Kahnweiler and Johnson, 1980; Sands and Richardson, 1986) do not take into account the lifestyles, constraints and issues which poor women may confront.

Knapp's(1981) criticism of stereotypical sex roles is well taken, but she too does not address this "other" population. This article, and ones by Kirk(1982) and Pitman (1988) address programming for reentry women. Kirk and Pitman do question structural issues of whether programs are designed to meet women's needs, however Kirk questions schooling for women, since it heightens their conflicts.

McCall's 1987 article on the Cuban literacy campaign of 1961 is an example of a descriptive piece that offers information about women where none was before, but provides no analysis. Another article that lacks adequate analysis is by Unger and Sussman(1986) who, while finding a cognitive dissonance in how feminists perceive their own and other's efficacy, offer no analysis for these results.

The remaining articles offer a perspective that comes closer to the role that feminist scholarship hopes to foster; critical analysis, recognition and acceptance of difference, and a call to action to make change.

In two articles on reentry women, Chandler (1984) and Kazemek (1988) provide a class-conscious challenge to the fact that the needs of the ABE (Adult Basic Education) woman student have been completely ignored, both in the literature and in programming. While the returning woman student has had much emphasis placed on her in the area of higher education, this "other" type of student has had no one to advocate for her. Gray and Hughes (1980) critique all of what is considered continuing education for women, stating that its emphasis on domestic or self improvement subjects only further oppresses women and they call for radical change in both content and structure of programs. Stace (1987) addresses a specific type of woman and the problems she encounters, not only as a woman, within various class and resource distinctions, but specifically as a disabled woman. She offers a scathing review of how womens' disability is compounded by inferior conditions of training, education and opportunity.

To these 5 authors, the issue of empowerment is key, but Stromquist (1986) and Machila (1989) address it as primary. These articles focus on international development and collective action and explore the connections between women's private lives and the greater societal framework. Grambs'(1987) article on human resource development also makes connections between the assumptions that the school system makes about careers and females who continue to stay classroom instruction. To Grambs, the idea of career is based on a male-model that denigrates women who choose to stay in teaching rather than move into administration.

#### **CONCLUSION**

From the low levels of published research, we see that information on AE and women as learners is largely lacking. A feminist analysis, when used to critique both this situation and the available literature, provides a needed perspective which calls on scholars to further develop the research and literature base on women, and to take into account the complexity and diversity of their lives.

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DEVELOPING HUMAN RESOURCES DURING ORGANIZATIONAL  
TRANSITION: AN INDUCTIVE CASE STUDY OF A  
CORPORATE ACQUISITION

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**Abstract:** Corporate acquisitions cause considerable trauma, for individual employees as well as organizations as a whole. An awareness of the predictable stages of transition can assist in identifying the timing of appropriate strategies.

Times of crisis can be optimum times for learning. This is certainly true during a corporate takeover. Corporate mergers and acquisitions cause considerable trauma, not only for individual employees, but also for organizations as a whole. Uncertainty, fear, anger and depression are inevitable emotional reactions following the news of a takeover. However, these intense emotional reactions, triggered by each employee's unique perception of the takeover, are rarely addressed by the acquiring company. More often than not, they are overlooked, or even denied, under the guise of "business as usual".

The purpose of this study was to explore the effects of transition on employees immediately following a corporate acquisition. An underlying premise of the research is that there are critical differences between the process of change and the process of transition. Thus, the potential interventions in successfully managing both processes must be different. An awareness of the predictable stages of transition can assist human resource development professionals, as well as managers who can act as agents of change within an organization, in identifying the timing of appropriate strategies.

While the motivation underlying such corporate partnerships has primarily been an economic one, there have been a number of other kinds of significant costs to organizations. Much of the earlier research focused on financial aspects and strategic fit. Recent literature emphasizes the "people problems" associated with corporate takeover, primarily the consequent stress experienced by employees at all organizational levels. "Merger syndrome" has been identified as a primary cause of the disappointing outcomes of seemingly well-planned mergers. Marks and Mirvis (1985) believed that the

syndrome is triggered by the unsettled condition immediately following a merger, and includes the executives' stressful reactions and the development of a crisis-management orientation. They stated that a merger or acquisition changes people's accustomed work arrangements, demands more time, poses countless uncertainties, and can threaten self-esteem. The degree to which executives are both strategically and emotionally prepared for its impact is a key factor in determining the stress that is likely to result.

But there is often a definite lack of attention paid to the executive managerial skills, or human resource considerations. Despite good strategic or organizational fit, some factors related to process--or how a merger plan is carried out--can contribute to its failure. Jemison and Sitkin (1986) identified three such critical factors that occur in the negotiation process of a merger. The first is that the involvement of specialists and analysts with particular expertise and independent goals often results in multiple, fragmented views of the agreement. Consequently, general managers may find it difficult to integrate these perspectives. Secondly, the increasing momentum to close the deal can force premature closure and limit consideration of integration issues. Third, both buyer and seller are often unable to resolve important areas of ambiguity before they complete the agreement.

It is important to note that because an acquisition process includes the behavioral outcomes resulting from initiating change, they are human resource concerns. Buono and Bowditch (1989) urged that the human resource dimension of takeovers should be accorded the same attention given to financial, legal, operational, and strategic concerns. Human resource problems can occur at both personal and organizational levels. The personal level involves the variety of emotional reactions that result not only from the takeover itself, but also from how it is perceived by individual employees. Organizational level difficulties involve the successful integration of two previously distinct corporate cultures.

**Methodology:** The methodological approach of this naturalistic study is analytic induction. The primary intent of the researcher was to learn, at first hand, how the employees of an acquired company experienced an acquisition--as they were experiencing it. As Guba and Lincoln (1985) concluded, while the

scientific paradigm of inquiry (based on epistemological assumptions of logical positivism and radical relativism) served the hard sciences well, it does not fit the phenomenology of human behavior. A naturalistic approach, utilizing methods drawn from ethnography, anthropology, and sociological field studies, permits the study of human behavior "in situ". The origin of qualitative methods is phenomenology, not positivism. The positivist searches for facts; the phenomenologist seeks understanding of human behavior from the individual's frame of reference (Sapre, 1990).

The setting of this research was a bank that had been recently acquired by another financial institution. The researcher, introduced as a member of the transition team by the acquiring bank, analyzed organizational documents, conducted 24 interviews, and made numerous field observations in order to assess the acquisition process. Interviews were a primary data source. There were initial interviews with the senior management team and other employees of the acquired bank, as well as with human resource professionals from the acquiring bank. Focused interviews helped to clarify the emergent themes. Characteristic of analytic induction, the researcher's own evolution of consciousness also served as a primary data source.

**Significant Findings:** The key themes that emerged in this study were the inevitability of loss, the denial of loss, and the dilemma of integration versus resignation. While every person interviewed thought that it was a "great opportunity" to be acquired by this particular bank, there were some necessary evils in the acquisition process. These included the gamut of disturbing emotional reactions on the part of employees that interfered with the success of the acquisition process. What was more confusing and stressful to employees of the acquired organization was the intensity of these emotions, as well as their vacillating, paradoxical nature.

Although the way in which individual employees perceived loss was dependent on a number of factors, their perceptions took some consistent forms: loss of identity and sense of history; loss of self-esteem; loss of autonomy; loss of team, sense of family, and friends; loss of immediacy of response to customers; and loss of concern for customers and community spirit. Each loss evoked intense emotions that must be dealt with. Each involved a detachment from something that helped employees to define



themselves, personally and in their world of work. The employees of the acquired organization lost not only their familiar external surroundings as they had known them, but also their internal stability, their psychological anchors.

Failure on the part of the acquiring bank to recognize these losses and attend to them impeded a successful transition process. The quickness of the acquiring bank to talk about their many benefits and advantages, though well-intended, was actually a discount of what the acquired employees were feeling. These employees needed to "let go" of what was, in order to fully embrace the "new" organization. Therefore, it is important to take inventory of the losses incurred. By not allowing for periods of mourning and establishing "rituals" as a means of establishing closure, an acquiring company can actually encourage a "we-they" mentality that increases the resistance to transition.

Denying loss or attempting to maintain the status quo in times of organizational transition only intensifies the anxiety and uncertainty, the anger and disillusionment that is experienced by employees. In this case study, the myth of business as usual spawned a significant number of mixed messages. The resulting gap between expectations and reality intensified the tension between the two companies. Timely, ongoing, consistent and accurate information is essential in allaying the feelings of helplessness, or loss of control, on the part of acquired employees. Feeling in control is critical for managing stress.

The third theme of integration versus resignation emphasized the importance of active involvement from the employees of the acquired organization. It is very important, as adults and professionals, to have a sense of autonomy, to be able to exercise it, and to be treated with respect. Rather than going into a company and telling them, "This is how you are to look now," an acquiring company must build in ways to involve the acquired company, ways that would lead to this understanding. Collaborative efforts are critical for the process of organizational culture integration. Failure to use the energy of the employees of the acquired company can result in mediocre conformity, or even the decision to leave the organization.

These three themes led to the emergence of a developmental model of transition. Stage One, Disengagement, is a time of letting go of former assumptions, beliefs, and perceptions. Stage Two, Ambiguity, refers to the gap that always exists between the old and the new. Though a time of confusion and paradox, it can also be a source of creative problem-solving. Stage Three of the model is Transformation. On a personal level, employees are now prepared to make new attachments, and to re-define themselves and their roles. On an organizational level, collaborative efforts are encouraged in order to assume a new corporate identity.

Implications of this study propose a critical educative role for human resource professionals. An effective way to prepare for change is to manage its preceding transition process. This task demands specific competencies. For example, Stage One involves letting go of the past in order to prepare for the uncertainty of the present and future. An awareness of the predictable stages of transition, and a sensitivity to its emotional impact on employees of both the acquiring and the acquired organizations, is essential for HRD professionals. Reflective listening skills can assist in gaining an understanding of how individual employees are perceiving the takeover. Employee perceptions are important, in that they serve as the basis for their needs. Counseling skills are necessary in order to assist employees as they deal with the anxiety and stress associated with inevitable loss.

Effective interpersonal communication skills are imperative in efforts to assist employees in accepting the ambiguity of the second stage of transition. Creative problem-solving skills must be encouraged, since the old answers do not fit the questions being raised during a corporate takeover. HRD professionals must understand and practice adult learning principles, with their emphasis on self-directedness and the development of critical thinking skills. Small group facilitation skills are also required, as HRD professionals encourage the team-building strategies so essential for collaborative efforts at corporate culture integration.

Conclusion: How an acquiring organization approaches the acquired company is critical in setting the

general tone of the takeover. Is it the intent of the acquiring organization to tap into the valuable human resources that exist in the acquired organization? Or is the intent to quickly teach the employees of the acquired company all they need to know in order to become like the acquiring company? Which posture an acquiring organization takes can make a dramatic difference between whether or not the employees of the acquired organization learn to identify with the new company, or resign from it (both literally and figuratively).

An attentiveness to disengagement is essential to a successful transition. Equally important is confronting the pain of paradox. But words such as these are alien to the world of business. The popular machine metaphor of business relies on predictability, or business as usual. Pressure to conform and avoid conflict is more the norm. Clancy (1989) stated that the unfeeling treatment of people, the overemphasis on rationality, and the neglect of ambiguity and intuition are its assumptions. This research study challenges the business-as-machine paradigm, because it asserts that the emotional reactions to transition can interfere with the best-laid organizational plans. A new business paradigm is called for: one that regards conflict as potentially positive and creative, one that encourages the empowerment of individuals, and one that requires new definitions of authority, power and leadership. To raise such an awareness is an important task for HRD professionals, as well as for managers at all organizational levels.

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## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT: THE DARK SIDE OF THE ADULT LEARNER/TEACHER RELATIONSHIP**

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**ABSTRACT** The adult learner/teacher relationship is consistently portrayed in our literature as one which has positive connotations, processes and outcomes. This study illustrates that such a view is overly simplistic for women and perhaps all adult learners.

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

There is a strong tradition in the adult education literature that the adult learner/teacher relationship has positive processes and is correlated with positive outcomes. The concept has essentially escaped being 'problematized' or 'deconstructed.' This is so despite empirical and theoretical literature from related areas which presents a contradictory, negative view of the adult learner/teacher relationship.

Given the above, the purpose of this paper is to argue that the field's traditional view of the adult learner/teacher relationship is overly simplistic. In order to accomplish this aim, the paper first identifies the traditional view of the adult learner/teacher relationship. Second, it examines a particular adult learner/teacher relationship--a gendered one--within a particular setting--the tertiary institution. In order to highlight the complexities of the adult learner/teacher relationship, the gendered relationship is examined as one within which sexual harassment occurs. The discussion is informed by both empirical data and theoretical discourses. Before concluding, the paper examines issues of concern which arose from discussions throughout the paper.

### **II. THE TRADITIONAL VIEW OF THE ADULT LEARNER/TEACHER RELATIONSHIP**

Fundamentally, the adult learner/teacher relationship is about a connectedness between the adult learner and the adult teacher within the context of a learning situation. The traditional view of the relationship as a 'warm fuzzy' is reified through the three processes discussed below.

#### **A. POSITIVE CONNOTATIONS**

The terms used to describe the adult learner/teacher relationship or the interactions that accrue to it consistently portray the adult learner/teacher relationship as a constructive one in which teachers are "helping" (Brookfield, 1983, p. 152), "consultants" (Knowles, 1990, p. 292) and "guide[s]" (Galbraith, 1990, p. 3). This affirmative view of the adult learner/teacher relationship is sustained across a variety of settings (eg: Brockett and Hiemstra, 1991).

#### **B. POSITIVE PROCESSES**

The processes of the ideal adult learner/teacher relationship are seen as both harmonious and spirited. In the first instance, the emphasis is on equality and mutuality. It requires the teacher's abdication of authority and a de-emphasis on their controlling, structured behaviours. Learners and teachers harmoniously merge their agreements and disagreements to create an adult education activity acceptable to both. In the second instance, the notion includes learners who are active participants in constructing the processes, goals and evaluation methods of the adult education activity. The emphasis is on concepts of involvement, industriousness, energy and action. Some of the field's classic pieces of literature promulgate this view of the learner (eg: Knowles, 1978; Lindeman, 1961).

#### **C. POSITIVE OUTCOMES**

The literature implies three favourable outcomes are attached to the adult learner/teacher relationship.

1. For many decades, adult educators have linked the adult learner/teacher relationship with adult learners' continuing participation, that is, persistence, in adult



education activities. Boshier (1973) suggested that the congruency of the learners' self-concepts with their concepts of professors (and also of other students) was closely associated with their decisions to drop-out or persist. This finding was supported and extended by others (eg: Lam and Wong, 1974).

2. Adult educators also link the processes of the adult learner/teacher relationship to adults' learning. Researchers consistently relate teacher/learner interactions to learning outcomes. Some envisage a learning outcome of academic achievement (Conti, 1985) and others aim for creativity (Dubin and Okum, 1973). Still others extend the notion and argue that even the motivation to learn (eg: Knowles, 1984) is related to the adult learner/teacher relationship.

3. The third desirable outcome attributed to the ideal adult learner/teacher relationship is the learner's development of personal and professional attributes. In the first instance, some argue that the relationship develops healthy self-awareness, self-confidence, and fosters personal growth and development (eg: Goldberg, 1980). In the second instance, some suggest that the adult learner/teacher relationship, in the form of a mentor relationship, is basic and necessary for career development and professional success (eg: Merriam, 1983).

There are a few adult educators who have hinted that the relationship cannot be so simplistically defined (eg: Candy, 1991). Many of these critiques have been oblique, however, rather than specific to the adult learner/teacher relationship. Thus, the following section explores the nature of a less positive adult learner/teacher relationship -- that of women's experiences with sexual harassment within the adult learner/teacher relationship.

## **II. RE-VIEW OF A PARTICULAR ADULT LEARNER/TEACHER RELATIONSHIP IN A PARTICULAR SETTING**

Each educational setting within which the education of adults, and thus adult learner/teacher relationships, occurs influences the adult learner/teacher relationship (Galbraith, 1990). Thus, this paper will narrow its exploration of the complexities of the adult learner/teacher relationship to one setting in which the education of adults occurs -- the tertiary institution. This illustrative exploration becomes more powerful when the relationship is portrayed as a gendered one within which sexual harassment occurs. This paper is not able to address fully the intricacies of gendered relationships cross-cut by race, ethnicity, sexual orientation or class. None the less, the problematic areas, tensions and contradictions highlighted in this paper clearly apply to those relationships as well.

### **A. PROCESSES AND PREVALENCE OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

Three elements that describe a range of behaviours are generally understood to be basic to the term. First, sexual harassment has to do with behaviours which include "ogling and staring, comments and jokes about women's body or appearance, physical contact (punches and touches), passes and casual sexual remarks, explicit sexual propositions" (Schneider, 1987, p. 51). It is this level of sexual harassment which is the most problematic to identify, as the line between acceptable and unacceptable comments and behaviours is a fine one. Fundamentally, behaviours are judged to constitute sexual harassment if they create an atmosphere which has sexual overtones.

Second, sexual harassment has to do with coercive requests for dates and sex. In this instance, a social relationship is imposed onto an academic one. Although it is possible to label these behaviours as consensual rather than coercive, such re-labelling may be naive and disguise the severity of the problem. Schneider (1987) found that 13% of graduate women in a major eastern University dated a faculty member at least once during their graduate academic careers. *However*, of the graduate women reporting such experiences, 30 percent felt pressured to date and 30 percent felt pressured to be sexual with the man. In other words, acceding to a request may not indicate a choice based on one's own free will and preferences.

The third element which describes the most extreme range of the sexual harassment behaviours concerns demands for dates and sex which are linked with overt

threats and/or promises. These behaviours may involve physical force such as grabbing, slapping or restraining.

These elements form a complex, interactive spiral. Thus, although adult learners may not experience coercive requests or demands for dates and sex *directly*, they may be aware that they are within an environment where it is occurring. In this respect, learners and teachers who view themselves as involved in consensual sexual relationships are held accountable for creating an environment of sexual harassment.

An examination of the sexual harassment processes allows us to see a strong underlying theme. Sexual harassment is clearly about unwanted, inappropriate and unwelcome sexual attentions *within the context of an unequal power relationship*. Unlike our literature, the sexual harassment literature works from the basic assumption that the adult learner/teacher relationship is inculcated with unequal power, authority and control statuses. Further, it notes that the "sexualizing of situations" (Skeggs, 1991, p. 127) combined with status inequities ensure that learners' power, authority and control are diminished to, and maintained at, a lower level than that of the teacher. The sexual harassment literature also highlights the more subtle, interactive aspects of the adult learner/teacher relationship. It demonstrates the usefulness of a model which incorporates a *range* of processes. As well, it introduces the notion of a collectively created environment which is influenced by the relationships of others.

These insights into the adult learner/teacher relationship might be dismissed if there were no evidence to substantiate the existence of sexual harassment. This is not the case. Numerous research studies show that sexual harassment exists in the setting which concerns this paper--tertiary institutions (eg: Dziech and Weiner, 1984; Paludi and Barickman, 1991). The data emphasize the possibility of undesirable adult learner/teacher relationships for women learners at tertiary institutions. They demonstrate the inconsistency between those women's unsavoury experiences and the representation of those relationships in the adult education literature. Finally, these data imply that the adult learner/teacher relationship may be located within a wider context of institutional and societal norms and values which foster or at a minimum tolerate sexual harassment. After all, in the face of empirical data collected over decades, sexual harassment has persisted.

## **B. OUTCOMES OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

The outcomes of adult learner/teacher relationships are particularly problematic since they are interwoven with issues of unequal power, authority and control. These ensure, to varying degrees, a dependent relationship of the adult student on the adult teacher for both overt (academic and economic) and covert (recommendations, references, mentoring) outcomes. The concepts of reward and punishment embedded within these dependencies clarify the appropriateness of allocations. It is in the context of "credit for potential sexual exchange" (Benson and Thomson, 1982, p. 243) that, for example, offers of extra help/refusal to help or flexibility/rigidity in deadlines become the currency of sexual harassment.

Research has shown that, although the outcomes of sexual harassment may vary among women, most women experience generalized negative responses. Paludi and Barickman identify five negative stress responses as "sexual harassment trauma syndrome" (1991, p. 29). Their work usefully classifies studies done earlier (eg: Koss, 1990). The responses they identify include emotional reactions of anxiety, denial, embarrassment, confusion and guilt. Physical reactions include headaches, lethargy, weight fluctuations, nightmares, panic reactions and gastrointestinal distress. Changes in self-perception include negative self-concept, lack of competency, isolation hopelessness. Social, interpersonal relatedness and sexual effects include withdrawal, fear of new people, lack of trust, changes in social network patterns, negative attitudes and behaviour in sexual relationships. Career effects include changes in study and work habits, loss of job or promotion, drop in academic performance, absenteeism, withdrawal from school and change in career goals. These outcomes surface in the longer as well as shorter term (Quina, 1990), t.

Once again, the sexual harassment literature explores at depth the potential for exploitation and abuse embedded within adult learner/teacher relationships. Indeed, it emphasizes the *lack* of mutuality and reciprocity in these relationships. It notes the subtle, complex interplay among reward, punishment and the relationship. It illustrates the usefulness of examining the relationship in terms of its emotional, physical, personal, interpersonal and sexual outcomes as expressed over time.

### C. THEORETICAL INTERPRETATIONS OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

As we have seen, the notion of differential power, is interwoven into the processes and outcomes of sexual harassment. In terms of sexual harassment, power relations are theoretically conceptualized in three dimensions: sexual objectification, gender stratification and organizational structures.

1. Sexual objectification has a biodeterministic base, that is, there is said to be a 'natural' sexuality which identifies men and which is different to that which identifies women. On the one hand, men are portrayed as aggressors and conquerors, with biologically insatiable sexual appetites. Dworkin (1981) extends this notion to make an innate link between male sexuality and violence. On the other hand, women are portrayed, for the most part as passive, detached recipients of sexual attentions. For non-white women sexual objectification may create a different kind of labelling, in which they are viewed as foreign, exotic, erotic and sexually adventurous (DeFour, 1990). In all instances, these portrayals are seen as the base of the 'natural order' of sexual relations between men and women.

This perspective on power has several implications for the adult learner/teacher relationship. First, it supports the view that men are entitled to engage in sexual flirtation. Even if that behaviour is identified as symbolic violence against women, it is seen to be consistent with the 'natural order' of sexual relations. Second, sexual objectification suggests that women would normally be complimented by such evidence of male sexual arousal. Third, it portrays the sexual objectification of women as a basic, underlying assumption of male/female interactions within our culture. This portrayal, some argue, explains why there is a reluctance to prosecute sexual harassers. It is, after all, the natural order of male/female relations. Finally, this perspective reinforces the idea that women differ from men in capabilities, interests, and abilities. In the educational setting, this may be interpreted to mean that some educational offerings are more suited to women than to men.

2. Gender stratification is based in the definitions of women and men socially constructed over time. It is about sexual inequalities embedded within a patriarchal culture which perpetuates and reinforces men as privileged and women as disadvantaged. Gender stratification ensures that women's access to resources, power, and authority is less, relative to men's access. Further, it defines what is acceptable masculinity and femininity. It places women in a 'private' sphere of familial, domestic and apolitical concerns and men in a more highly valued 'public' sphere of patriarchy, politics and full-time paid work (Collard and Stalker, 1991). Within the woman's sphere, fall the nurturing and caring roles; roles which Frye (1983) identifies as the servicing of men. In personal service, women provide the clerical and secretarial support to men as they perform their masculine roles. In sexual service, they not only provide for men's sexual needs, but also strive to be "nice" and attractive for them. In ego service, women encourage, support, praise and give attention to the male.

These gender stratified roles are problematic for adult learner/teacher relationships in two ways. First, like sexual objectification, they foster acceptance of sexual relationships as part of the natural and normal order of relationships between the male and female spheres. Thus, the woman student who provides personal and ego service may be viewed as willing to provide sexual service as well. Second, the more strongly delineated these roles are, the more possibility there is for misinterpretation if a woman student does not conform to the definitions of her sphere. Thus, the friendliness and academic enthusiasm of a woman student may be misinterpreted as an invitation for sexual advances (Benson and Thomson, 1982). This may be particularly problematic

for women of different class, colour or ethnicity who do not live according to the roles of the dominant culture within which they move.

3. Asymmetrical relationships of power, control and authority are embedded in both administrative and academic practices of educational organizations. Administrative decisions are made along lines which indicate the importance of vertical stratification and hierarchical power. As well, it is clear that men make most of those decisions. They dominate the organizational world, its ownership and control, its positions of status and authority and its cultural values (Burrell and Hearn, 1989). Academic processes also reflect this asymmetry. Curricula and discourses, based in patriarchal patterns of power emphasize the place of male knowledge and ways of knowing over those of women (Lewis and Simon, 1986). Together administrative and academic processes within educational organizations create an asymmetry which ensures that the adult teacher negotiates from a position of more power and the adult learner from a position of less. This interpretation means that sexual relationships within such structures are *always* open to prosecutions as sexual harassment and are *never* truly consensual.<sup>2</sup>

Clearly, a theoretical approach to power relations gives us a potentially rich tool with which to study adult learner/teacher relationships. First, it suggests that there are negative elements within an adult learner/teacher relationship which are so culturally based that they are embedded in every adult learner/teacher relationship within that culture. Second, it hints that behaviours which are labelled as the 'norm' in an adult learner/teacher relationship may in fact play a major role in oppressing the adult learner. Finally, it demonstrates that destructive elements are possible, perhaps inevitable, in gendered relationships within asymmetrically organized educational organizations. **III. ISSUES OF CONCERN**

The above discussion uncovers three related issues of concern. First, it is evident from our literature that *outside* the specific setting of this study, we have dismissed and ignored these kinds of experiences and their consequences. We do not know, for example, to what extent adult women learners experience sexual harassment in residential, school-based, university continuing education, staff development and training, community development locations. We have created a tradition which casts the experience of many women learners into the shadows.

Second, our literature, for the most part, does not address the experiences and theories of adult learner/teacher relationships cross-cut by class, colour and ethnicity and sexual orientation. Within the literature of our field, it is evident that some work has begun on adult learner/teacher relationships and colour and ethnicity (eg: Colin III and Preciphs, 1991). That research, however, has only begun and to date has not addressed formally either class or sexual orientation in terms of the adult learner/teacher relationship.

Finally, the positive views of the adult learner/teacher relationship suggest a disturbing, yet instrumental naivete in which the dominant views are intertwined with the fundamental tenets of andragogy. Since these views dovetail neatly into the pedagogy-andragogy debate, they support the view that the nature of adult education as a field of study and research is unique. A serious critique and examination of these issues may thus pose a threat to the field. It is an interesting dilemma.

#### **IV. CONCLUSION**

This paper suggests that we go beyond acknowledging the complexities of the adult learner/teacher relationship and explore in depth its dark side. Such investigations

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<sup>2</sup> It is important to note that women are not necessarily passive victims to these three inter-related expressions of power. Increasingly, covert, individualized responses to sexual harassment are being replaced by explicit institutional and legal strategies to counter sexual harassment. As new strategies ensure effective policies and procedures for prosecution they encourage women to express their resistance and seek redress in public forums.



may force the rethinking of some dearly held traditions. As we meet this challenge, women, and indeed all adult learners, will benefit from our endeavours.

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## **WOMEN TEACHERS MENTORING WOMEN LEARNERS: ON THE INSIDE WORKING IT OUT**

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**ABSTRACT:** A feminist critique of the mentoring literature reveals that women academics, located as both 'same' and 'other' within patriarchal academe, are in unique positions as mentors.

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Increasingly, the field of adult education is expressing interest in the mentoring process (Bolton, 1980; Daloz, 1991; Merriam, 1983; Merriam, Thomas and Zeph, 1987). Before this line of research is extended, however, it is essential that the process is conceptualized more fully. Thus, the purpose of this study is to critique the current conceptualization of mentoring from a feminist perspective. In order to do this, I first define the nature of mentoring. I then undertake a feminist critique of that literature, first from a general point of view. Second, and most importantly I reject the literature's basic underlying assumption that women mentors produce and reproduce the patriarchal academe. I present an alternative view and explore the theoretical limitations and possibilities of women academics' location on the boundaries of academe. I then examine the implications of that location for the mentoring process. I conclude by highlighting the need to consider the unique nature of women mentors' location in academe.

### **II. MENTORING**

Clear definitions of mentoring in academic settings are difficult to establish. Consequently, this paper explores mentoring in terms of its relationships and outcomes -- two dimensions which are basic to most of the definitions.

#### **A. RELATIONSHIPS**

1. In terms of structural relationships, the dominant representation in the literature is of a hierarchical mentoring relationship. Normally, an older, wiser person advises, counsels and acts as role model to a younger person on a one-to-one basis. The activity is a top-down one in which a neophyte academic is chosen or "anointed" (Sandler and Hall, 1983, p. 2) by an experienced and senior academic who has "high organizational or specific career status" (Bova and Phillips, 1982, p. 7) and the power associated with that status. An alternative but much less frequently considered model of mentoring suggests structural relationships which are based in lateral, multiple connections rather than hierarchical dyads (eg: Hill, Hilton Bahniuk, Dobos and Rouner, 1989).

2. In terms of personal relationships, the literature discusses mentoring as an activity which involves an intimacy or intensity which transcends friendships and supervision. This intensity varies within and between mentor(s) and mentee relationships. Shapiro, Hasletine, and Rowe (1978, p. 57) suggest a continuum that moves from peer pals, through guides and sponsors to mentors. Their model traces the developmental nature of the mentoring relationship from sharing through explaining and protecting to promoting and shaping the mentee.

#### **B. OUTCOMES**

In each instance below, the outcomes are reciprocal, that is, the mentor as well as the mentee acquires the outcomes. Space limitations prevent an exploration of the former.

1. Researchers consistently stress the connection between mentoring and an outcome of career advancement (eg: Messervy, 1989). A related outcome is the mentee's acquisition of the practical, technical skills and formal scientific

knowledge required in academe (Reskin, 1979). A second career-related outcome is the mentees' raised visibility in the academic community. This may occur as mentors encourage their mentees to establish a research programme. Such a programme results in the mentees making contact with other academics and in the increased possibility of publications (Jacobi, 1991).

2. The second outcome of an ideal mentoring activity concerns personal development (eg: Wright and Wright, 1987). In this instance, mentoring results in the mentees' heightened self-esteem, confidence and self-assurance in both the intellectual and emotional aspects of their lives (Schockett and Haring-Hidore, 1985). Processes of mirroring and reflecting ensure that mentees understand and value their intellectual and personal strengths and weaknesses more clearly (Daloz, 1991).

3. The third major outcome of ideal mentoring concerns the mentees' enhanced understanding of their professional identity within academe. Research reveals that those who have mentors feel much more integrated into the functioning research university (Lyons et al, 1990). In other words, mentoring moves the mentee into the "ecology of the workplace" (Sands, Parson and Duane, 1991, p. 179). The mentor is thus "a guide in the rites of passage" (Lyons, et al, 1990, p. 278) who shares information and strategies which enable the mentees to enter into an "often impersonal and threatening world" (Daloz, 1986, p. 220).

### **III. A FEMINIST CRITIQUE**

From a feminist point of view, there is a major problem with the conceptualization of mentoring. It is androcentric, that is, it has a male bias and orientation. It expresses this in two general ways: in its construction of research designs and in its avoidance of the problematics of men mentoring women. More specifically, it possesses an underlying assumption that women mentors are producers and reproducers of the patriarchal academe.

#### **A. CONSTRUCTION OF RESEARCH DESIGNS**

It is clear that the majority of the mentoring research has a male orientation. It does not consider gender as a major variable. Most research is based upon, and findings are generalized from, mixed sex populations. The majority of research projects are conceptualized in a way which does not recognize the experiences of women mentors as unique from those of men. This gives the impression that the nature of male and female mentors and of the mentoring process is homogeneous. On the other hand, among those studies which *do* consider sex as a major variable, there is a tendency "to cast in stone what differences do exist and to view females as aberrant or deficient when and where they fail to comply with male "norms."" (Collard and Stalker, 1991, p. 76).

#### **B. AVOIDANCE OF PROBLEMATICS**

The majority of the mentoring literature ignores the problematics of men mentoring women. To a certain extent, this merely reflects the literature's tendency to assume that mentoring is a process of mutuality and congruence which provides "a lifetime of colleagueship and supervision" (Houle, 1979, p. 112). A few authors have acknowledged the possibility of tension and dissension in the relationship (eg: Bush Wilde and Garrett Schau, 1991). Others (eg: Daloz, 1991) state that the mentoring activity can be counterproductive and negative for both the mentor and mentee and identify issues of excessive demands for time, unrealistic expectations, manipulation, jealousy, over dependency, over protectiveness or inappropriately sexually intimacy.

Even fewer researchers acknowledge these issues in relation to gender. The Project on the Status and Education of WOMEN (Sandler and Hall, 1983), for example, suggests that male mentors' behaviours are connected to women's traditional roles as helpers rather than as achievers. They propose that deeply embedded paternalistic views ensure that male mentors treat women mentees as

"teacher's pet" (p. 8) more than as potential heirs or worthy academics. Further, because women are viewed too often as sexual partners rather than professional colleagues, we are overlooked as potential mentees. Other studies note that male faculty affirm male students more than female students; more frequently give both informal and formal encouragement to male students; treat male students as a colleague and select them above women for teaching or research assistants.

These situations are exacerbated when the women are also aged, handicapped, lesbian, of colour or of ethnic origin. It appears that mentors relate best to mentees who share their values, and attitudes. Thus, mentees who are women and who also have one of these attributes are less likely to be mentored in North American academic settings. In sum, the mentoring literature while not declaring these kinds of mentoring relationships 'unworkable', clearly stresses the problems inherent in them.

### C. UNDERLYING ASSUMPTION

The third and theoretically most important critique of the mentoring literature concerns its assumption that women mentors socialize mentees, most of whom are women (Busch, 1985), into acceptance and accommodation of the patriarchal academic system. This view must be critiqued for its simplistic, overly deterministic interpretation of women as producers and reproducers of the patriarchal academe.

### IV. MENTORING ON THE BOUNDARIES

Women mentors appear to engage in a delicate balancing act. On the one hand, we accommodate the patriarchal institution of academe which threatens to consume and subsume us. On the other hand, we resist those structures and risk the consequences of anonymity and marginality. Women mentors' work is much more complex than this dichotomous representation, however. Women who are within "the sacred grove" (Aisenberg and Harrington, 1988) are simultaneously and dynamically involved in the processes of being both 'same' and 'other.'

Women mentors in academe experience being 'same' in a variety of ways. As Talpade Mohanty (1983) notes, the hierarchical nature of academe forces an unavoidable homogeneity and sameness on those within the institution. Through its clearly-defined relationships it creates a conformity and similarity of connections throughout the organization. As 'same' we engage in structured competition for recognition of publications, research, scholarship, teaching, influence and power. Indeed, new opportunities opening up in academe for women increasingly "tempt women into complicity with these arrangements through individual careerism" (Fisher, 1982, p. 61).

Women academics also exhibit 'same'-ness as we exemplify the norms, values and beliefs of the male academic culture within which we work. Henry suggests that this is often the case, since women academics are those "who filter through the rigorous screening system and satisfy their [male academics'] criterion for admission to the inner circle of academe" (1990, p. 129).

At one level, women who practice 'same'-ness successfully, become invisible--that is, we present no problematics within the academe. This 'same'-ness, however, is illusory. For although women academics may be inside, we are simultaneously, inevitably and irrefutably 'other.' It is self-evident that we are a group who are in the minority, do the least prestigious teaching, take the majority of part-time positions and staff 'women's specialties' and 'women's fields.' Less obviously, we are also 'other' relative to the patriarchal academic structures, to the expectations for women, to other women and to ourselves.

In terms of the patriarchal structures, women's criticisms of the patriarchal bases of research and theory locate them as 'other.' This situation may be an inevitable one for women, for, even if we enter our disciplines without the explicit intent to critique it, our "outsider experience and status...[will] sooner or later" drive us to express "values counter to the established definition of the subject"



(Aisenberg et al, 1988, p. 86). Alternatively, if we act in stereotypically female ways and are compliant, cooperative and nurturing, we are allocated to teaching and service roles (Simeone, 1987)--roles which once again identify us as 'other' in an environment where scholarship and publishing records are valued over teaching and service.

Women also remain 'other' in terms of stereotypical expectations for us. These expectations suggest that there is a women's culture distinct from the men's, and thus academic, culture. Several works (eg: Noddings, 1984) highlight the unique nature of women as concerned with connectedness and caring. This view of woman as separate and unique has been "extremely helpful in baring some of the roots of masculinist liberal capitalism" (Fox Keller and Moglen, 1987, p. 511), but it also reinforces the view of academic women as "anomalies" (Roland Martin, 1990, p. 13). We become 'other' as we break with the traditional roles and expectations of the women's culture and enter the territory which usually is viewed as "properly the province of men" (Aisenberg et al, 1988, p. 65).

At the same time, our engagement with academe is limited by the extent to which we can create non-traditional partnerships within our private spheres in order to accommodate the time, energy and resource demands of our public spheres. These relationships also reinforce an 'other'-ness relative to expectations for women. In the face of this 'other'-ness, women still assume the major responsibility for the household and family (Simeone, 1987). We are caught between the demands of the public and the private spheres. This in itself might not create women as 'other.' However, it is combined with an academic structure which acts as if each faculty member had supportive and responsible partners at home.

Women academics are also 'other' relative to women within the academy who have less power, status and authority. This is particularly relevant in our relationships to women who differ in colour, class, ethnicity and sexual orientation. Women of colour have explored their location as a "double minority" (McKay, 1983, p. 144) most eloquently. They note that too often white, middle class women who dominate academe consider issues directly related to our own experiences and ignore the inseparability of racial and sexual oppression. For women who differ in colour, class, ethnicity and sexual orientation, their differences are reified as an inescapable 'other'-ness relative to white, heterosexual women as well as to white men and black men. The dominant group of women academics thus play a role in creating the very experiences of isolation and invisibility which we experience and condemn. We are simultaneously the oppressor and the oppressed, the creators of 'other'-ness and the 'other,' within the male domain.

Finally, women academics may be 'other' in relation to ourselves. By locating ourselves within patriarchal structures, we may risk losing ourselves. We may have "cooperated in our own defeat" (Farwell Adams, 1983, p. 140) as we are absorbed, admitted and shaped by the patriarchal structures. There is a sense of a lack of fit between the theoretical and our personal life world experiences. In other words, to be a successful woman academic and to achieve in educational institutions is to somehow not be a woman (Collard and Stalker, 1991).

#### **V. IMPLICATIONS FOR THE MENTORING PROCESS**

This, then is the location of women academics--simultaneously both 'same' and 'other'--caught in the web of 'same'-ness, but never able to transcend our 'other'-ness. On one hand, this can be interpreted as a location of paralysis. After all, in structural relationships women as 'other' are engaged in our own struggles to establish high organizational or specific career status. Lacking the power associated with that status, most women might appear to be inadequately placed to be effective mentors. In terms of personal relationships, women who establish sensitive, caring and concerned personal relationships with our mentees risk confirming views of

ourselves as located primarily within the women's culture, rather than within the male academic culture. In that environment, such caring relationships are associated with increased professional and political vulnerability.

Women academics' location similarly confuses our role of mentors in ensuring the traditional outcomes. To the extent that we enter into discourses of dissonance which are oppositional, we are poorly located to facilitate mentees' entry into the dominant academic networks, ways of producing knowledge and research methodologies. Some argue that consequently we are not oriented to facilitate mentees' movement and integration into academe. Finally, some judge that we are not well placed to heighten mentees' self-development as we struggle to create value for our own ideas and behaviours within the patriarchal academe.

This view of women mentor's unique location as one of paralysis is unacceptable. It portrays women in academe as passively receiving the inherited and imposed nature of the patriarchal academic culture. The alternate view of women academics presented below represents our location as one of possibility and transformation as we simultaneously accept and oppose the patriarchal structures.

In the earlier discussion, women's location was conceptualized as a narrow boundary line between being subsumed and consumed by, or being marginalized and separated from, the male academy. An alternative conceptualization expands women's razor's edge existence into a viable space within which we can move collectively, and possibly re-create and re-form institutional and societal structures. It portrays women as groups of active agents who are able to take and shape space to our own ends. It acknowledges women's ability to self-consciously critique our experiences of oppression and together to act upon them. Within this framework mentoring is not merely a tool for socialization into and accommodation of the current patriarchal, classist and racist structures. Rather, it is an active mechanism for their transformation. Recalling that women academics mentor primarily women mentees, we thus can play a particular role in fostering resistance to the male academy. Embedded in this view of women mentors as actors, is the notion that located within this unique space, we can transform the nature of society. There is the suggestion that through our activities within the institution, we can extend our influence beyond its boundaries and act upon larger social issues. The assumption is that we carry with us different views which can assist in the conscientization of our mentees to political and economic oppressions. This view of women mentors as transformers of institutions and society is problematic, however, if it stands alone. Fundamentally, it is impossible to ignore women mentor's reality of being simultaneously both 'same' and 'other'.

## VI. CONCLUSION

A reconceptualized, thoughtful view of mentoring acknowledges the unique location of women mentors. It notes both women's accommodation of and separation from patriarchal structures. It values the unique nature which allows us to mentor within the walls of academe at the same time that we reformulate the structure of those walls. It critiques the assumptions of static hierarchical power and authority which underlie the dominant model of mentoring. It adds to the literature a dynamic view of power in which the mentor's location plays an important role. An extended view of mentoring endorses the resistance and transformations that women mentors bring to patriarchal cultures. It critiques the existing power bases and explores the ways in which power can be used to challenge the status quo. In sum, a reconceptualized view of the mentoring process moves away from the dominant androcentric conceptualization toward a more widely-based, critical view which is informed by the experiences of women and women mentors.

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## **TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING IN ADULTHOOD: A SOCIO-CONTEXTUAL PERSPECTIVE**

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**ABSTRACT:** This study examined the transformative learning experiences of six adults following a self-identified critical life event. A common six phase learning process was identified which impacted six separate life spheres for each adult.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Research into transformative learning experiences in adulthood has been growing in recent years. Mezirow (1991) has been instrumental in suggesting that adult learning and development has more to do with the "transformation" of experience than the accumulation of knowledge. His theory of transformative learning addresses how cognitive meaning structures are transformed to become more inclusive, discriminating, permeable and integrated (Mezirow, 1991). Life events have been recognized as important triggers for engaging in transformative learning experiences (Mezirow, 1991; Merriam and Clark, 1991).

To date, however, research has focused almost exclusively on the cognitive restructuring changes that occur in transformative learning experiences. Little emphasis has been placed on the role other variables play in these experiences, such as affective learning and social context. Keane (1985) is one of a few researchers that readily acknowledges the crucial role emotions play in transformative learning. While Jarvis (1987) emphasizes the influence of the social context in learning processes, he fails to integrate specific contextual variables into his learning theory. Clark's (1992) research found evidence of social context influence in transformative learning experiences, however, she examined only the impact the social context had on the learning process. Left unaddressed was the impact the learning process had on the social context in which the individual lived.

The intent of this study was to aid in the development of a holistic understanding of transformative learning experiences by exploring the roles affective learning and social context play in these experiences. In addition, understanding the impact this learning has on the lives of adults and what changes may actually occurred in various life spheres was also explored.

### **METHODOLOGY**

A descriptive qualitative research design was initially employed.



However, as the study commenced the research design was modified to incorporate a participatory, collaborative approach to the collection and analysis of data. Critical incident forms were used as a method of purposive sampling in order to select participants with highly developed communicative and reflective abilities. Using Brookfield's (1987) definition of significant personal learning, participants were selected who stated that their event had a significant impact on their lives, changing their perception of themselves, their values and priorities, and their view of the world in general. Only precipitating life events occurring prior to 1991 were included to allow time for reflection and learning to have occurred.

Each participant completed a written description of his/her critical life event and subsequent learning, and engaged in three personal interviews, each interview lasting between 1 to 1 1/2 hours. Insights, perceptions, feelings, thoughts, and learning about themselves and about their social contexts were gathered from the participants. Areas to be examined within the interviews were collaboratively identified with the participants. All interviews were transcribed and the data were initially analyzed by the researcher using phenomenological and heuristic methods.

Emerging themes and categories were taken back to each participant and discussed at the start of subsequent interviews. Through a process of dialogue, a six phase learning process emerged. The phases, the sequencing of the learning process, and the use of continuums to structure the process arose from these discussions. As well, the six life spheres that were identified as having been changed as a result of the transformative learning experience were identified by the participants themselves. As the analysis continued, if contradictions arose, the participants were re-contacted either by phone or in person. In addition, a written draft of the data analysis was circulated to each participant to allow for feedback and discussion.

Six participants, two males (31 and 35 years of age) and four females (29 - 47 years old) were selected to participate in this study. All six were enrolled in post secondary studies at the time the study commenced, ranging from diploma to doctoral programs. The self-identified critical life events included marital separation; divorce; spiritual revelation; personal rejection; death of an infant daughter; and death of three family members.

## RESEARCH FINDINGS

The major findings of this study are summarized under five headings: (a) learning process and impact; (b) cognitive and affective learning; (c) self awareness; (d) the role of social context in learning; and, (e) critical reflection.

**Learning Process and Impact:** The critical life events of the participants prompted a learning process which for some has spanned many years. The inability to utilize old coping mechanisms and ways of "being within the world" as a means of dealing with their events initiated a process that comprised six common phases of learning: (a) disorientation; (b) emotional and/or physical reaction; (c) building connections; (d) journey into self; (e) reaffirmation of self; and, (f) contextual awareness.

While many changes in perceptions have occurred for the participants since the start of their learning process, and continue to occur today, major perceptual changes common to all of the participants are outlined as follows: (a) the development of a sense of personal power over the direction and purpose of their lives; (b) a clear sense of "self" as separate from others was gained through increased self awareness; (c) a re-examination and redefining of roles, values and priorities; (d) an adoption of increasingly higher order values; (e) the development of a critically reflective perspective of their social, political and cultural context.

The impact of this learning was experienced within six separate life spheres including: (a) significant relationships; (b) work; (c) leisure; (d) spirituality; (e) health and (f) community. Higher value was attached to personal relationships which became priorities for all of the participants (five of the six participants developed healthier relationship with immediate and extended family); the perception of work changed from a means of achieving economic rewards to an opportunity to derive a sense of meaning in their lives (four out of the six participants changed careers); a search for a spiritual understanding began (only one of the participants attend church and felt that spirituality was a part of his life prior to his critical life event); emotional and physical health became a priority, represented in changed leisure emphasis and the adoption of a healthier lifestyle, and; a broader sense of community emerged (participants redefined their roles and responsibilities within their communities and became active members in addressing community issues).

**Cognitive and Affective Learning.** The critical life events as experienced by the participants in this study promoted both affective and cognitive learning and development. Cognitively identifying and restructuring inappropriate or "distorted" meaning perspectives appeared to be only one step in the process of transformative learning. The affective learning that was required to consolidate the new cognitive perspectives was the real stumbling block. Participants continually stated how they would revert to old ways of being and acting until they were able to work through the emotions and feelings associated with an old meaning perspective. Even though they could

cognitively identify how their thinking and beliefs had changed, they were not able to act upon their cognitive learning until they had engaged in affective learning. Learning how to identify, explore, validate, and express affect was a predominant component of transformative learning for the participants in this study.

**Self Awareness:** Participants continually made reference to an increased sense of self, and attributed their transformative learning experiences and resulting life changes to an increase in self awareness. Reflection upon, and learning about both "individual" and "social" meaning perspectives (two distinct types of meaning perspectives identified by the participants) were central components of the learning experiences.

Individual meaning perspectives were identified as those which emphasized the participants' perception of "self", and were formed by the individual based on past experience. Social meaning perspectives consisted of those "ascribed" beliefs and values dictated by the society in which the participants lived, particularly in relation to "self within the world". For the most part, these social meaning perspectives had been uncritically assimilated in childhood and acted as filters through which the participants assigned meaning to their experience, often remaining unchallenged.

Participants stated that as children they were not taught to explore or question various life perspectives or life choices. Meaning perspectives regarding their place and purpose in life were uncritically assimilated. As adults, they felt they were rewarded for maintaining the status quo and for fulfilling "ascribed" roles and goals. Their critical life event provided an opportunity to stop and reflect upon the meaning perspectives that guided their actions. The long and difficult process of self awareness became a personal priority for all the participants. Knowing and honouring self, and acting with integrity was identified as a major component in their ongoing development.

**The Role of Social Context in Learning:** The data from this study suggests that the transformative learning processes are social in nature; that an inter-dependent relationship exists between the individual and his/her context. This relationship is both reciprocal and reactive -- impact on one was felt by the other. Social context appears to play two major roles in transformative learning experiences: (a) in the formation of meaning perspectives, and; (b) in the transformation of meaning perspectives.

The meaning perspectives that the participants adopted, both individual and social, were determined to a great extent by the context in which they lived. The context dictated certain social norms and roles as well as influenced the experiences they had as individuals. However, more importantly, the social context played a major role in

either reinforcing or transforming these meaning perspectives by dictating the support, guidance, opportunities and barriers which were available to the participants.

Exploring, challenging, and transforming meaning perspectives created a great deal of struggle and controversy for the participants, particularly challenging social meaning perspectives. Opportunities for support and guidance were critical elements in these processes. Each participant engaged in either professional counselling and/or community support groups as part of their learning process and agreed that had they not had the social support necessary to transform meaning perspectives, their learning experiences would have been very different.

**Critical reflection:** What continually emerged as a technique for initiating, engaging in, and enhancing transformative learning experiences were the participants' abilities to critically reflect upon themselves and their social, cultural and political contexts. Community and professional support services again played an invaluable role in encouraging and supporting this personal reflection.

Once having learned to self-reflect, participants generalized this learning to other contexts. The development of increased self awareness and personal power enabled the participants to develop a critically reflective perspective of the environments in which they lived. They began to question and challenge taken-for-granted beliefs and ways of behaving both within their personal lives and within their social, cultural, and political contexts.

## DISCUSSION

The transformative learning experiences of the participants within this study involved a holistic transformation of every aspect of their lives. Affective learning and development was necessary for cognitive learning and development to be consolidated and acted upon. One could not ignore the very real emotional pain and turmoil that accompanies cognitive learning. Critical reflection upon their beliefs, values, feelings, thoughts, and goals as well as upon their social contexts led to increased self awareness and development of personal power. With a stronger sense of self and feelings of personal power, participants redefined roles, values, and personal goals and began challenging existing societal beliefs, roles, and institutions. The focus on societal change came on the heels of personal change.

A critical component in these learning processes was the social support, guidance, opportunity and barriers that the participants experienced. These components aided in shaping, enhancing and hindering the participants learning processes. Recognizing the role social context plays in initiating and shaping transformative learning experiences, and likewise, acknowledging the impact this learning has



on the individual's social context is essential in understanding transformative learning experiences.

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## GATEKEEPING AND THE AEQ: AN INSIDE VIEW

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### Abstract

The *Adult Education Quarterly* publication activity from 1988-1992 was analyzed for gender and background (academic, practitioner, student) of authorship, geographic region of origin, type and subject of research, and publication status. This analysis includes not only what was published, but all submitted manuscripts.

### Introduction

Understanding the direction and the development of a knowledge base is important to any field of study. Having a body of knowledge defines the field as separate from others, giving it credibility and significance. The compass that often reflects a discipline's direction and knowledge base can be found in its research accomplishments. These endeavors are recorded and disseminated in scholarly journals, books, pamphlets, conference proceedings, etc. Publications not only represent the knowledge base of a given field, such as adult education, but as well its history, trends, research norms and the social structure of communication between scholars and those who have the professional expertise in the field (Boshier & Pickard, 1979; Brockett, 1989, 1992; Copeland & Grabowski, 1971; Dickinson & Rusnell, 1971; Garrison & Baskett, 1987; Griffith, 1966; Kidd, 1981; Long, 1977, 1983; Long & Agyekum, 1974; Pipke, 1984). These publications also tell the reader what knowledge and scholars are being promoted in the study of adult education (because of publication) and what knowledge and scholars are not being promoted (by the lack of publication). A good example of promotional concerns raised by some researchers is reflected in the dominance of the Western male perspective found in most adult education publication activities (Hayes, 1992; Kim, 1990). In essence, the publication process is a type of "gatekeeping" that goes on in a field of study.

Gatekeeping is the process of "screening the information which is permitted to circulate widely among members of the discipline" (Beyer, 1978; Crane, 1967). In many publications this process, especially with scholarly journals, often involves the review of submitted manuscripts by editors and consulting editors (represented by respected scholars in the field), where they decide what manuscripts are to be published or not. The review process is rigorous and only a small percentage (10-20%) of submitted manuscripts, especially in the social science fields, are published by the receiving journal (Beyer, 1978). This similar publication rate is also found in the prominent journal of adult education. For the last four years the publication rate for the *Adult Education Quarterly* (AEQ) has averaged 16%. To put this in more concrete terms: of the 386 manuscripts that were submitted to the *Adult Education Quarterly* while at the University of Georgia between 1988 and 1992, 58 of those manuscripts were accepted for publication in the AEQ. Therefore, it is these 58 articles that have become, along with other adult education publications, the representative "body of knowledge" of the field. However, what about the rejected manuscripts that were not published, particularly those 328 submitted to the AEQ? They represent over 80% of what is actually being researched and written about. What do the unpublished and rejected manuscripts say about this field? Do they as a group reflect a different perspective of interest in adult education? Does the small percentage of published manuscripts represent accurately the research interest and endeavors of adult education scholars and practitioners?

It is the intent of this paper to address these questions and others by providing an "inside view" of the AEQ. It is an analysis of not just published manuscripts, but also all unpublished and rejected manuscripts that were submitted to the *Adult Education Quarterly* between 1988-1992 while it was under the editorship of the Department Adult Education at the University of Georgia. The objectives are to: (a) provide a descriptive summary of all submissions for gender and background (academic, practitioner, student) of authorship,

geographic region of origin, type and subject of research, and publication status; (b) compare the differences in trends projected by accepted and submitted manuscripts; and (c) explore in greater detail, based on the additional data, the concerns raised in previous studies about the *AEQ*'s imbalanced representation of quantitative research and male perspective, and a lack of international perspective in its publication activity.

#### Review of Related Literature

There have been a number of studies involving the publication activity of the *AEQ*. Beginning in the 1950s and 1960s a neophyte field of study emerged (Dickinson & Rusnell, 1971; Long & Agyekum, 1974). During that time, there was an increase in sophisticated research-based articles, a content emphasis on adult learning, program planning, instructional materials and methods, and adult education as a field of study; and a decrease in personal belief and program description articles. This same pattern seems to continue on into the 1970s and 1980s, when the university faculty, particularly the larger universities dominated the publication activity of the journal (Long, 1977). The *AEQ* is seen as the main modality by the professorate for disseminating their research efforts. Boshier and Pickard (1979) used the *AEQ* to illustrate that the field of adult education had its own unique body of knowledge by looking at citation patterns that reflect an increasing reliance by scholars on theories and concepts developed within the field, as opposed to those from other disciplines. However, it isn't until the 1980s that researchers moved beyond the descriptive report of publication activity to a more critical perspective of adult education publication activity. Studies during this time period show that the quantitative research methods still dominate the publication activity of the field (Fisher & Martin, 1987; Kim, 1990; Hayes, 1992). Kim (1990) makes the same conclusion and sees the *AEQ* as guilty of not promoting a global understanding. This critical perspective continues, in that the *AEQ* is seen as not receptive to articles that deal with gender/women issues (Hayes, 1992).

Methodologically, the quality of these *AEQ* studies evolved as well, with most reflecting the degree of current research sophistication of its publication time period. Earlier studies demonstrate little control for researcher bias and few details on how the articles were analyzed. More recent studies utilize intricate instruments and multiple judges for analysis and as well analyze a greater number of journals and articles. However, none of the studies that analyzed the *AEQ* ever included in their analysis those articles that were rejected for publication. Only published articles were analyzed. These unrepresented articles constitute a sizable portion of research efforts by authors in the field of adult education. For example, if Hayes (1992) had access not only to what was published, but what was rejected by both the American and British journals in her study, her sample could have amounted to possibly 19,062 articles (based on an average 16% acceptance rate), instead of 3,050 articles. Therefore, by analyzing the unpublished submitted manuscripts of the *AEQ*, a more accurate perspective of the field can be offered.

#### Methodology

The methodology of this study was a simple content analysis similar in procedure to those found in previous studies of the *AEQ* (Hayes, 1992; Long, 1983; Long and Agyekum, 1974). Access to all submitted manuscripts from 1988-1992 was secured from the editorship at the University of Georgia. Only manuscripts that went through the entire review process were included, not the articles that were considered "out-of-scope" and returned to their authors. These amounted to 10% of the total articles submitted, approximately 39 in number. All other manuscripts ( $N=347$ ) were analyzed for year of submission, gender and background (academic, practitioner, student) of authorship, single and multiple authorship, geographic region of origin, type and subject of research, and publication status (acceptance or rejection). The sub-properties of each category are shown on Table 1. Some of the categories were borrowed from previous studies (Long, 1983; Long and Agyekum, 1974) in an effort to provide some reliability when discussing trends.

### Findings

The findings are explored in reference to trends, the differences in analysis between submissions and acceptances (publications), and the concerns raised in previous studies about the *AEQ*'s imbalanced representation of quantitative vs qualitative methodology, male vs female authorship and perspective, and North American vs International country of origin in its publication activity. As seen in Table 1, the findings are organized according to submissions, acceptances across each category, and acceptances within each category. For example, when looking at gender submissions and acceptances across categories: 34%

Table 1  
Descriptive Summary : Number and Percent of Submissions and Acceptances Within and Across Categories

| Category               | Submissions |        | Acceptances<br>Across Categories |        | Acceptances<br>Within Categories |               |
|------------------------|-------------|--------|----------------------------------|--------|----------------------------------|---------------|
|                        | N           | %      | N                                | %      | N                                | %             |
| Authorship: Gender     |             |        |                                  |        |                                  |               |
| Female                 | 117         | 34.01  | 15                               | 25.86  | 15                               | 12.82         |
| Male                   | 168         | 48.84  | 35                               | 60.34  | 35                               | 20.83         |
| Male & Female          | 59          | 17.15  | 8                                | 13.79  | 8                                | 13.79         |
| Authorship: Number     |             |        |                                  |        |                                  |               |
| Multiple               | 102         | 29.39  | 13                               | 22.41  | 45                               | 12.75         |
| Single                 | 245         | 70.61  | 45                               | 77.59  | 13                               | 18.37         |
| Vocation:              |             |        |                                  |        |                                  |               |
| Academic               | 251         | 72.54  | 49                               | 84.48  | 49                               | 19.52         |
| Practitioner           | 42          | 12.14  | 3                                | 5.17   | 3                                | 7.14          |
| Student                | 17          | 4.91   | 3                                | 5.17   | 3                                | 17.65         |
| Mixed                  | 36          | 10.40  | 3                                | 5.17   | 3                                | 5.17          |
| Country of Origin:     |             |        |                                  |        |                                  |               |
| Africa                 | 2           | 0.58   | 0                                | 0.00   | 0                                | 0.00          |
| Asia                   | 3           | 0.86   | 0                                | 0.00   | 0                                | 0.00          |
| Australia/New Z.       | 14          | 4.03   | 5                                | 8.62   | 5                                | 35.71         |
| Canada                 | 33          | 9.51   | 6                                | 10.34  | 6                                | 18.18         |
| Europe                 | 23          | 6.63   | 5                                | 8.62   | 5                                | 21.74         |
| Middle East            | 5           | 1.44   | 0                                | 0.00   | 0                                | 0.00          |
| United States          | 267         | 76.95  | 42                               | 72.41  | 42                               | 15.73         |
| Type:                  |             |        |                                  |        |                                  |               |
| Forum                  | 21          | 6.05   | 11                               | 18.97  | 11                               | 52.38         |
| History                | 15          | 4.32   | 5                                | 8.62   | 5                                | 33.33         |
| Qualitative            | 81          | 23.34  | 14                               | 24.14  | 14                               | 17.28         |
| Quantitative           | 130         | 37.46  | 11                               | 18.97  | 11                               | 8.46          |
| Theoretical            | 100         | 28.82  | 17                               | 29.31  | 17                               | 17.00         |
| Subject:               |             |        |                                  |        |                                  |               |
| Adult Development      | 8           | 2.31   | 1                                | 1.72   | 1                                | 12.50         |
| Adult Learning         | 106         | 30.55  | 13                               | 22.41  | 13                               | 12.26         |
| AE as a Movement       | 41          | 11.82  | 10                               | 17.24  | 10                               | 24.39         |
| Evaluation/Testing     | 18          | 5.19   | 4                                | 6.90   | 4                                | 22.22         |
| Gender/Ethnic          | 19          | 5.48   | 5                                | 8.62   | 5                                | 26.32         |
| Literacy               | 21          | 6.05   | 3                                | 5.17   | 3                                | 14.29         |
| Program Develop.       | 26          | 7.49   | 3                                | 5.17   | 3                                | 11.54         |
| Philosophy             | 11          | 3.17   | 2                                | 3.45   | 2                                | 18.18         |
| Participation          | 45          | 12.97  | 8                                | 13.79  | 8                                | 17.78         |
| Research Methods       | 12          | 3.46   | 4                                | 6.90   | 4                                | 33.33         |
| Teaching/Curriculum    | 30          | 8.65   | 5                                | 8.62   | 5                                | 16.67         |
| Training/CPE           | 10          | 2.88   | 0                                | 0.00   | 0                                | 0.00          |
| Total of Each Category | 347         | 100.00 | 58                               | 100.00 | 58                               | Mean<br>16.71 |



of all submissions and 25% of all acceptances were of female authorship while 48% and 60% respectively, were of male authorship. However when looking at gender acceptances within categories, you get an acceptance rate, for example, the female authorship acceptance rate was 12% and the male's 20%. This means that of all the articles submitted by female and male authors were accepted at a rate of 12 and 20 percent based on what each submitted.

### Trends

Focusing on the first purpose of the study, trends, the submissions rate shows that gender of authorship continues to be dominated by males with 48% of the submissions, followed by women authors (34%) and shared male and female authorship (17%). The majority of manuscripts came from the academic ranks (72%), single authorship (70%), and with a very small submission rate by students (5%). Also, a preponderance of submissions came from the United States, over 267 manuscript out of total of 347. This lack of international submissions is heightened even more when the United States and Canada are combined, as North America, where they make up over 86% of all the submissions. Furthermore, the *AEQ* during the four-year period received only 10 manuscripts from non-Western countries, less than 3% of the total number of submissions. Looking at type category other trends are seen consistent with previous studies, such as quantitative research having the greatest number of submissions ( $N=130$ ), but followed closely by theoretical formulations ( $N=100$ ), and qualitative research ( $N=81$ ). Lastly, looking at the subject of the articles submitted, the trend continues into this decade with most articles submitted focusing on adult learning ( $N=106$ ).

### Differences between Acceptances and Submissions

When looking at acceptances (across categories in Table 1) in comparison to its submissions, it illustrates a difference created by reviewing just what was published, as all other previous studies of the *AEQ* had done. For example, this difference can be seen in the vocation category where academics submit 72% of the articles, but represent 84% of what is actually published, even though practitioners and students represent few of the publications (10%), they make up at least 17% of all submissions. Other differences can be seen in the country of origin category in that geographic regions of Australia/New Zealand (4% submissions vs. 8% acceptances) and Europe (6% vs 8%) have lower submission rates than acceptance rates. Probably the greatest difference between submission and acceptances is found in the type category where quantitative ranks first in submissions (37%), but third in acceptances (18%). Finally, the submissions rate clearly shows that a great deal more is being written about adult learning than what is actually published (30% vs. 22%) and the reverse is happening for articles that deal with adult education as a movement (11% vs. 17%). The findings show that when looking only at acceptances in the analysis of the *AEQ*, the articles are most likely to be of male, academic, and single authorship from the United States and of a theoretical or qualitative type with a subject matter about adult learning or adult education as a movement. This seems to reflect a change in the field away from quantitative research and adult learning. However, when all submitted articles are analyzed, the findings reveal a different story, in that quantitative research and an adult learning as a type and subject still dominate the field of study.

### Imbalanced Representation

The third part of this study explored the concerns raised about the *AEQ*'s imbalanced representation of quantitative vs qualitative methodology, male vs female authorship and perspective, and North American vs International country of origin in its publication activity. An effective way to see if there is a publication imbalance by the *AEQ* for certain categories of articles is to compare the average acceptance rates within each category with the overall average acceptance rate of the *AEQ* (16%). For example, this means looking at just what was submitted by single authors ( $N=245$ ) and what was their

average acceptance rate (18%) based on their submissions (see acceptances within categories in Table 1). Using the figure (16%) as a guide post, the findings illustrate the imbalanced representation by the *AEQ* in reference to each category. The categories that had a higher acceptance rate than the average were articles: by males (20%), single (18%), academic (19%), and student (17%) authorship, from geographic regions of Australia/New Zealand (35%), Europe (21%), and Canada (18%); of forum (52%), history (33%), and qualitative (17%) type; and of subjects about gender/ethnic issues (26%), evaluation/testing (24%), adult education as a movement (22%), and philosophy (18%). On the other hand, those categories that had a lower acceptance rate than the average were articles: by females (12%), multiple (12%), and practitioner (8%) authorship; from geographic regions of Africa (0%), Asia (0%), Middle East (0%), and the United States (15%); of quantitative research types (8%); and about subjects of training and CPE (0%), adult development (12%), adult learning (12%), literacy (14%), and program development (12%).

The findings in Table 1 (acceptances within categories) reveal there are certain imbalances in *AEQ* publication activity, but in contradiction to some of what was found in previous studies. A greater male perspective is reflected in the journal in that manuscripts submitted by male authors have a higher acceptance rate than those submitted by female authors. However, this finding is confounded by articles of gender/ethnic subject which has the highest acceptance rate (26%) in the subject category. One possible reason for the large difference in male and female authorship can be seen by crossing the categories of type, gender, and status. The findings show that even though female authors submit 32% of all quantitative manuscripts, none were accepted for publication. They also show that there is not an imbalanced representation of quantitative and North American articles based on their acceptance rates.

#### Discussion and Conclusion

Access to all submitted manuscripts of a journal results in a more accurate picture of what is actually being researched and written about in a field of study. Specifically, based on submissions of the *AEQ*, the trends of adult education are not really changing all that much. It is still dominated by male academic authorship, from the United States, using a quantitative research design, and mostly on subjects of adult learning. However, what has changed is what is being accepted for publication. There is an increase in qualitative research and subjects of adult education as a movement. Also, some of the very categories that were identified by previous research as inadequately represented in the *AEQ* (qualitative, gender/ethnic, international) are not only represented, but have higher acceptance rates than the average.

It seems that some of these differences in trends, acceptances, and representation are more a reflection of what is submitted and less due to the gatekeeping process of the *AEQ*. However, there are questions that still remain unanswered, such as: What does the differences in acceptances and submissions say about the direction of adult education as a field of study? Why does the *AEQ* receive so few international articles? Why are more students not publishing especially considering the large number matriculating in the field? What is the explanation for the high rejection rate of female authored quantitative studies? If these questions and others are going to be explored by researchers in the future they will need to analyze all submissions, not just acceptances, and continue with an "inside view" of the *AEQ*.

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## INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCY: A TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING PROCESS

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### Abstract

This paper presents findings of a qualitative study which examined how adults learned to live and work successfully in cultures other than their primary culture. Discussed are theory, experiences, and skills essential to understanding the learning process of intercultural competency. The findings are explored within the context of transformative learning theory.

### Introduction

A precarious new world order precipitated by shrinking global resources and an increase in international communication have necessitated the need for people to work and live outside the United States. Unfortunately, many of them are not successful at their cross-cultural experience. According to the International Herald Tribune, "More than one-third of all Americans who take up residence in foreign countries return prematurely because they are unable to adapt to day-to-day life" (cited in Storti, 1984, p. xiii-xiv). This high degree of failure results not only in a loss of training, recruitment, and transportation expenses for overseas personnel, but can also result in serious diplomatic, political, and military consequences between the differing cultures. If this country is to be effective at associating with other cultures in the rapidly changing conditions in the world today, it is imperative that we have individuals who are successful at working and living in cultures other than their own—that they be interculturally competent.

Over the last quarter of a century numerous studies have been conducted on the concept of intercultural competency. It has been explored under many different labels, such as cross-cultural adjustment, cross-cultural awareness, cross-cultural effectiveness, multiculturalism, intercultural effectiveness, cultural competence, and intercultural communication competence (Benson, 1978; Dinges, 1983; Hannigan, 1990; Hammer, 1987; Kim, 1991; Ruben, 1989; Ruben & Kealey, 1979; Spitzberg, 1989). The primary focus of most of the research has been to identify predictors such as skills, traits, attitudes, and knowledge that are indicative of intercultural competence. This has often resulted in lists of attributes (empathy, respect, overseas experience, listening skills, tolerance for ambiguity, etc.) denotative of successful sojourners. However, these lists and models tell us little of the learning process of how one becomes interculturally competent. Understanding the learning process is essential to developing more effective education programs and identifying factors that would aid the sojourner during his or her intercultural experience. The field of adult education offers transformative learning theory that could act as a model for this learning process.

As a sojourner travels to another culture to live for an extended period of time he or she often experiences a transformation. It occurs out of a necessity for survival, out of a need to relieve stress and anxiety often experienced as the stranger struggles to meet basic needs. It is a transformation that requires the sojourner to look at his or her world from a different point of view—a perspective of the world that is often in conflict with personal values and beliefs. An American, for example, often struggles initially in the Middle East and Latin America with their nonlinear concept of time. The sojourner who is successful at working through and learning from these kinds of cultural experiences becomes interculturally competent within the host culture, developing "a more inclusive, discriminating, and integrative perspective" (Mezirow, 1991, p. 167). It is the purpose of this study to examine the learning process of becoming interculturally competent and to explore its relationship to transformative learning theory.



### Theoretical Framework

Understanding the process of intercultural competency means looking at studies under a variety of different but related terminologies, such as culture shock, sojourner adjustment, cross-cultural adaptation, cross-cultural adjustment, and intercultural transformation. (Adler, 1975; Benson, 1978; Church, 1982; Kim, 1988; Kim & Ruben, 1988; Hannigan, 1990; Yoshikawa, 1987). Intercultural competency as transformative and adaptive is built upon research that focuses on the process of the intercultural experience. In essence, it examines what a sojourner undergoes mentally, physically, and behaviorally when he or she partakes in a significant intercultural experience—in becoming interculturally competent. This process is often viewed in two ways: (a) that of a problem approach to understanding a sojourner's transition into a new culture; that of culture shock as a problem to overcome and minimize (Church, 1982; Furman & Bochner, 1986), and (b) the learning/growth approach (Adler, 1975; Kim, 1988, 1991; Kim & Ruben 1988; Mansell, 1981; Yoshikawa, 1987) that sees culture shock as a catalyst for learning. The most significant concerns about the learning/growth approach are: first, it does not address specifically the learning that is taking place by adults during intercultural transformation from the theory and research of adult learning; and secondly, when the learning concept is used, it is not explored in-depth in recognition of the intricacies of the learning process.

Transformative learning theory offers a model that addresses the shortcomings in the learning/growth approach. Perspective transformation and intercultural transformation can be linked on three dimensions: (a) as a catalyst for change, (b) as a process, and (c) as an outcome. In a perspective transformation the catalyst for change dimension is a disorienting dilemma which occurs as a result of an acute personal crisis, such as a death of a significant other, divorce, a debilitating accident, job loss, or retirement (Mezirow, 1991). A disorienting dilemma seems similar in nature to culture shock, the catalyst for change for intercultural transformation. It is the initial stress, anxiety, and helplessness experienced when entering a new culture. Culture shock "is a necessary precondition to change and growth, as individuals strive to regain their inner balance by adapting to the demands and opportunities of the intercultural situation" (Kim & Ruben, 1988, p. 310).

For the process dimension, both perspective and intercultural transformation offer similar models of change. Each offer hierarchical stage models of the transformation process during the learning experience whereby people evolve from lower to higher levels of competence. Intercultural transformation begins with a stage or pattern of alienation and initial contact, followed by a trial and error period of testing new habits and assumptions, and concluding with a stage of duality and interdependence within the new culture. Mezirow's (1991) process is analogous to this, in that it reflects ten stages or phases, beginning with a personal crisis and transcending through stages of critical reflection ultimately arriving at "a reintegration into one's life on the basis of conditions dictated by one's new perspective" (p. 169).

The outcome dimension reflects a change in world view, an outcome found in both perspective and intercultural transformation. Kim (1988) sees intercultural competency as anchored in the individual's adaptive capacity to alter one's perspective in an effort to accommodate the demands of a different culture. This capacity means having the ability "to manage the varied contexts of the intercultural encounter regardless of the specific cultures involved" (p. 265). It is this change during an intensive intercultural experience that is mirrored by Mezirow's (1991) change in perspective transformation where significant personal experiences often initiate a revision in meaning perspectives and move individuals "toward a more inclusive, differentiated, permeable (open to other points of view)" (p. 7), and integrated world view.

These three dimensions of perspective transformation and intercultural transformation seem to suggest that the concepts are intricately linked. Transformative

learning theory as a model of how personal paradigms evolve and expand in adulthood offers an explanation of how a person learns to become interculturally competent, integrating the new learning into a more inclusive and discriminating world view.

#### Methodology

The research design for this study was qualitative. Qualitative research allowed for the exploration of the phenomenon under study from the internal frame of reference of the sojourner. It elicited their perceptions and interpretations by gaining access to their thoughts, feelings, values, and actions within the context of the intercultural learning experience. The primary method of data collection was in-depth semi-structured interviews of 60-90 minutes in length from interculturally competent individuals. The selection of participants for this study was based on the following criteria developed from previous research on intercultural competency:

1. Each had the United States as their primary culture.
  2. Each was at least 25 years of age or older during his or her intercultural experience.
  3. Each lived in the host culture a minimum of two years.
  4. Each spoke the host language as his or her primary form of communication.
  5. Each expressed positive feelings about the intercultural experience.
- A sample of 12 participants were identified for the study. There were diversified sample of five women, seven males, three African-Americans, one second generation Hispanic, eight Euro-Americans from varied geographic regions of the United States. The constant comparative method of data analysis was used in developing findings.

#### Findings

From the data emerged a model that explains the learning process of becoming interculturally competent (seen in Figure 1). It provides a longitudinal perspective identifying a contiguous series of components in the process of becoming competent. It is an ongoing process, constantly evolving, as a participant has more and more intercultural experiences. The first component is "setting the stage" which recognizes that each person comes to the intercultural experience with former critical events in their life, personal goals, varying amounts of intercultural training, and previous intercultural experience that influence the learning process. These experiences set the stage, creating a context of "learning readiness" for the participants in becoming interculturally competent.

As the stage is set, each participant experiences "cultural disequilibrium" during the initial period while in the host culture. It becomes the catalyst of the learning process and involves stressful experiences where the participants struggle to bring order and balance back into their lives. The participants feel frustrated, lonely, scared, and overly excited at times because much of what is happening around them cannot be explained by their primary culture world view. It is these ensuing emotions that pushes the participant to learn to become interculturally competent. Cultural disequilibrium seems to be intensified by gender and marital status of the participant in some host cultures. Also, it is muted to some extent for those participants who had had previous experiences of marginality in their primary culture (African-Americans) and/or high degree of host language competency.

In response to cultural disequilibrium, the findings revealed that all the participants used a variety of "behavioral learning strategies" to regain balance in their life. They all became active observers of their surroundings, watching, listening, and reading about the host culture. All were active participants through socializing with the locals, eating the local food, and wearing the local dress. And all developed significant friendships with members of the host culture, who became their cultural mentors in the host country. It was these learning strategies that led to greater competency in the host

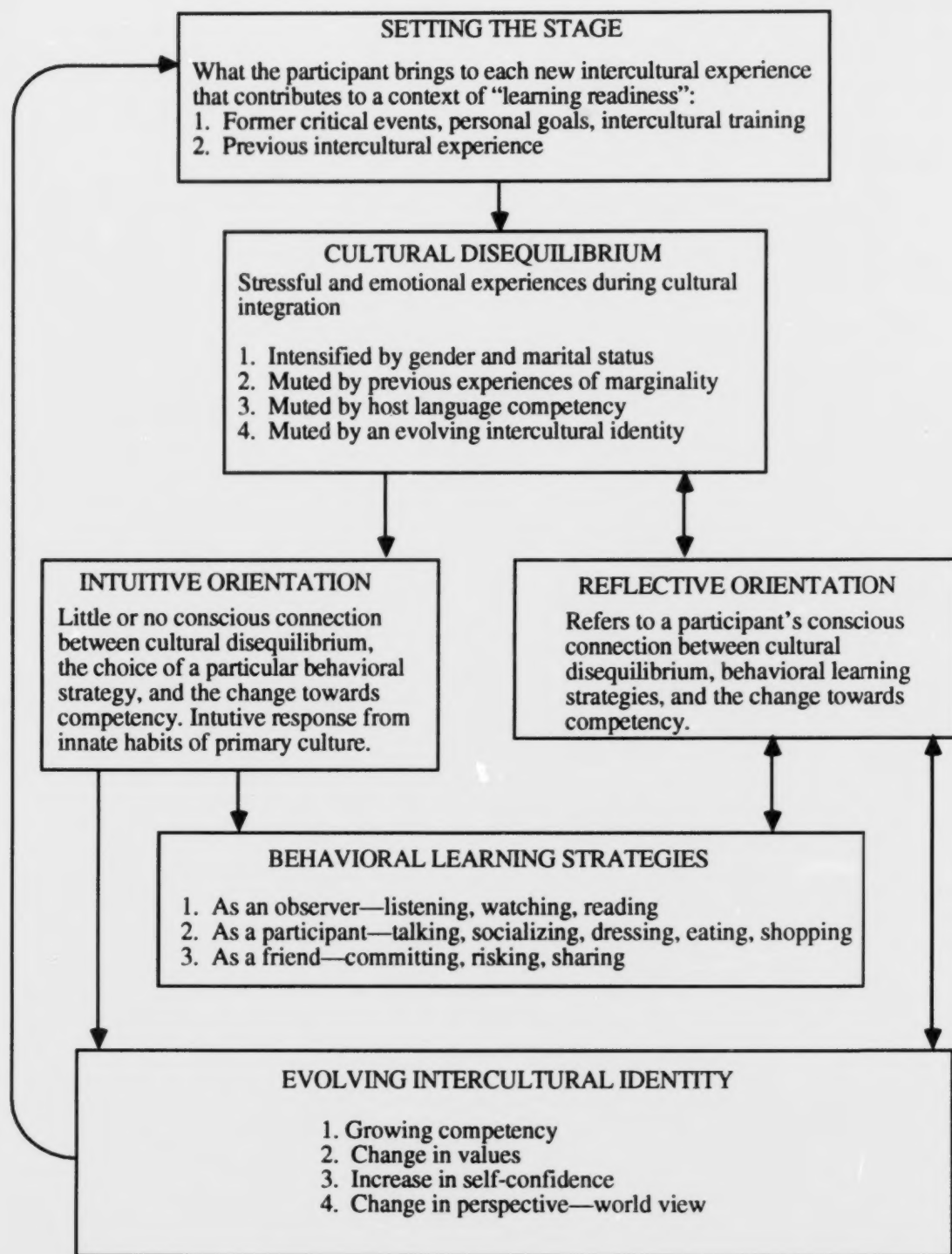


Figure 1. The Learning Process of Intercultural Competency

culture. How they decided on a particular learning strategy was the result of two different orientations. One was cognitive, that of a "reflective orientation." Participants reflected on their intercultural experiences making a conscious connection between the cultural disequilibrium, possible behavioral learning strategies, and the change taking place in themselves (see two-way arrows in Figure 1). Some participants reflected little about their intercultural experiences, relying more on a second orientation, an intuitive one. This orientation shows little conscious connection by the participant between the cultural disequilibrium, possible learning strategies, and their change towards competency. They seem to prefer a more action and experimental learning approach to intercultural challenges, with little or no reflection on their intercultural challenges. (see one-way arrows in Figure 1).

The outcome of the learning process is seen in the last component as an "evolving intercultural identity" by the participants. This identity is indicative of changing values where there is a preference and appreciation for cultural diversity, an increase in self-confidence, and a transformation in perspective to a more inclusive and integrated world view. It is an evolving component, illustrated by the arrow in the model that returns to setting the stage, better preparing the participant for the next intercultural experience.

#### Discussion and Implications

The findings of this study raise some important issues about both intercultural competency and transformative learning theory. They illustrate that the learning process of becoming interculturally competent is both complex and simplistic. The complexity is seen in the different influences brought (setting the stage) to the intercultural experience by each participant and how these influences form a context of readiness for learning to take place. Also, that culture shock, as cultural disequilibrium, even though experienced by all participants, is not generic in nature and is muted and intensified by a variety of factors. The simplicity of the model is seen in the common sense, everyday kind of learning strategies such as watching, getting involved, and making friends that all the participants used in learning to live successfully in the host culture. Furthermore, it validates to some extent that being interculturally competent results not only in an increase of competence and confidence, but a change to a more inclusive world view.

The findings also seem to suggest that the concept of transformative learning theory explains to some degree the learning process of intercultural competency. This can be seen in cultural disequilibrium as being analogous to a disorienting dilemma, the catalyst of a perspective transformation. The behavioral learning strategies are indicative of Mezirow's (1991) phases of exploring options through new roles and relationships. The findings also show that there is an increase in competence and self-confidence during the transformation process. However, it does call some of Mezirow's (1991) assumptions into question. It recognizes that what participants bring to such a difficult experience influences the transformation process such that context places a significant role in the learning experience. Most importantly, not all participants who experienced a perspective transformation seem to critically reflect extensively on their psychocultural assumptions in relationship to the host culture. Many relied on their intuitiveness, innate habits, and values developed in their primary culture, responding to cultural disequilibrium with little conscious connection or rational thought between their struggles and possible strategies that would bring their life back into balance. They had a preference to learn through action and experimentation. This suggests that there are different learning approaches to perspective transformation and it is possibly not contingent upon critical reflection.

This study ultimately raises more questions than it answers about transformative learning theory, with more research needed. For example, what do people bring to a learning experience that might affect the transformation process? What different factors



intensify and mute a disorienting dilemma? How does intuitiveness play a role in perspective transformation? In the study of intercultural competency these findings challenge others to explore how sojourners can be trained interculturally using transformative theory as a method. They also stress the importance of teaching basic learning strategies, the need to both critically reflect, and to encourage participants to trust their own intuition in response to intercultural challenges. Most importantly, this study hopefully leads to a greater understanding of how others learn to become interculturally competent when living and working outside their primary culture.

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## ADULT LEARNING THROUGH COLLABORATIVE INQUIRY

### thINQ

***ABSTRACT: thINQ, a group of doctoral candidates, examines collaborative inquiry, a new-paradigm approach to research, as a learning strategy that may have practical significance for adult education practitioners.***

thINQ is a collaborative inquiry group comprised of five doctoral candidates at Teachers College, Columbia University who responded to an invitation from Dr. Elizabeth Kasl in the summer of 1991 to investigate a process that Peter Reason and John Rowan called "new paradigm research." She cautioned that prospective participants should "have an eagerness to experiment and a very high tolerance for ambiguity." We met, five tentative souls, and after four meetings committed ourselves to the study of collaborative inquiry.

Collaborative inquiry is related to other participatory models of research and learning such as co-operative inquiry, action science, action inquiry, participatory research, participatory action research, and human inquiry (*Collaborative Inquiry*, 1990 and 1992). The common denominator for all of the above is that each model seeks to do research with people, not on people.

After studying the work of Reason and Rowan (Reason and Rowan, 1981; Reason, 1988) and examining the reports of many projects that had used the techniques of new paradigm research, we adopted our inquiry approach. Our group constructed a working definition: Collaborative inquiry is a process of repeated episodes of reflection and action through which a group of peers strives to answer a compelling question of importance to each person.

The models that we studied are concerned primarily with research and only peripherally with aspects of learning. Our own concerns, as adult educators, are twofold: may collaborative inquiry serve as both a technique for research and as a strategy for effective learning? The inquiry question that we hammered out after a number of discussions is: **What aspects of the collaborative inquiry process facilitate or impede adult learning?**

In determining the structure of our research model, we began with our own group of five, which we at first called the core inquiry group and later renamed thINQ, a group name that illustrates the collaborative nature of a thinking process fostered by the inquiry technique. Since a study of our own group is insufficient to examine the complexity of learning we thought might be revealed through the collaborative inquiry model, we formulated a federated structure that includes, in addition to

thINQ, five field inquiry groups. Each researcher initiated a group to investigate a problem of practice that reflects the interest of that individual. In all cases, the issues put forward by the thINQer stemmed from compelling and long-held interests. Although the five of us initiated the field inquiry groups, they function independently in answering their respective inquiries. We, in thINQ, participate as equals in these groups, working to answer the inquiry question constructed by each group, while also making observations to answer our primary inquiry question: **What aspects of the collaborative inquiry process facilitate or impede adult learning?**

Through the examples presented by Reason and Rowan and as a result of our own preliminary reflection on the process as it unfolded in our group, we agreed that an inquiry group should meet the following criteria:

1. Strive to make new meaning.
2. Research with people, not on people.
3. Engage in inquiry that has repeated episodes of reflection and action.
4. Consist of individuals who have within their power the ability to take action on the issue under inquiry.
5. Be made up of individuals who approach the inquiry question on a level playing field.
6. Participate in the inquiry holistically, not reductionistically.
7. Employ discourse as a critical aspect of the inquiry process.
8. Rely on voluntary participation and commitment to the group process.
9. Be comprised of learners who take responsibility for their learning.

To gather information for our dissertations, all sessions of the core and field groups are recorded and transcribed, constituting the major segment of our data. In addition, we have conducted interviews and meetings with experts in collaborative inquiry, and have held focus sessions and interviews with the field inquiry group participants. We also keep learning journals and field notebooks and encourage the field group participants to do the same to support reflection.

As of writing, thINQ has begun the process of making sense of the data we have collected to date; the material is dense and complex. In this paper we present a limited number of observations that relate to the early stages of our inquiry and to three themes: characteristics of our groups, the role of the facilitator, and the collaborative inquiry's potential as a "liberating structure" (Torbert, 1991). Who we are and how our groups were formed constitute the beginning of the learning process.

John Bray is a staff developer and a high school science teacher in a rural, northern New York school district. John reports that he is trying to "overcome the feeling of isolation that teachers have even though they work in the same building. I didn't select our group; I issued an invitation open to any faculty member and out of that we have a group of eight; that constitutes about half of our secondary school faculty." His field group's question is: **How can we, school teachers, improve our practice through developing a sense of community utilizing collaborative inquiry?** The question evolved after three group sessions from a tentative query proposed by the initiator concerning improving "practice through explication of teachers' theories-in-use." As a group, the teachers were uncomfortable with a stated problem that was "theoretical" and chose a more "practice-oriented" approach. This inquiry group refers to the process of framing the question as "humanizing," "organic," "becoming," and "evolving."

Joyce Gerdau is an Education Program Specialist for the Academy for Professional Development, New Jersey Department of Education. As a staff developer, Joyce was "interested in creating programs responsive to teachers and administrators faced with the dilemma of how to integrate new technologies more humanistically into the teaching - learning process. I invited people from state agencies, public schools, and community colleges with like-minded interests who had never had the opportunity to work formally together to join in the group." The question developed by this group is: **How can educators be assisted to prepare for and integrate technology into the teaching - learning processes at their respective sites?** The wording of this group's question remained elusive during the second session; issues of divergence and convergence were synthesized into sentence stems which the initiator later refined. Her suggested wording, on which there was consensus, was adopted at the third session of the group.

Linda L. Smith works independently as a facilitator of food and nutrition programs throughout the United States, seeking to combine national policy with grassroots program development. Her field group chose the question: **What are the ways we can lower the barriers to peer counseling?** Linda describes the group of peer health counselors as "strong community women who have much learning to share, but no voice. My reason for working with this field group is to capture that voice." After three chaotic sessions, the group saw the project as "frustrating," "unsettling" and "wishy-washy" but continued to identify themes. Between the third and fourth sessions they informally focused on "becoming partners." At the fourth meeting the women quickly confirmed a question that reflects building partnerships as a major concern. The original intent of the initiator was to concentrate on barriers imposed by health clinic operations and related partnerships



with health professionals; but the group expanded the question to include experiences with clients and attention to the organizational structure of the peer counselors as essential elements of the inquiry.

Lyle Yorks is Professor of Management at Eastern Connecticut State University. He describes his group as being set up "in two stages. It grew out of a series of conversations about action-reflection learning I had with two colleagues who became co-initiators. We invited other faculty who represented diverse areas of the university and had expressed an interest in learning issues." The question of inquiry derived from the initiators' interest in faculty risk-taking and empowerment and how a learning organization might evolve in a university community. The wording of the question was suggested by the initiators. The focus was changed to reflect how students might become more responsible for their learning. After the third session of the larger group and several discussions on the implications of the question, the wording read: **How can we get students to take responsibility for their learning in a way which makes the university a learning organization?**

Annette Weinberg Zelman is Assistant Dean in the Office of Instructional and Community Services at Rockland Community College in Suffern, New York. Annette says, "I didn't choose the group. As I began to talk to people at school about setting up a collaborative inquiry on intuition, a few people showed enthusiasm and asked to be in the group. The group formed itself in an intuitive way." Originally, the initiator of the group had proposed that the inquiry be centered on intuition as it is used in teaching and learning in the classroom. With relatively little discussion, the group, at its second session, formulated the question: **How can we promote or nurture intuition?** This question presupposes the legitimacy of intuition and allows group participants to consider the role of intuition in all areas of their lives not only the classroom.

Our inquiry groups offer a rich source for the study of the collaborative inquiry process. The five field groups represent a wide variety of characteristics, including educational levels and economic strata. For example, the group of peer counselors "understand poverty" and range in educational level from eighth grade to college; half of this group are immigrants. By contrast, members of the other groups are college educated and work in academic settings; many hold doctorates. Collaborative inquiry has proven effective as a learning strategy for all of the participants.

In four of the groups, members work in the same institutional setting although they may not see each other on a regular basis. In the other group the members are connected by their work as state employees,

but do not work for the same agencies. All of the groups in academic settings include both genders and a diversity of academic disciplines.

Despite the differences among groups, we find commonalities emerging. In all cases, the inquiry question grew organically, sometimes painfully, out of the experiences and needs of the inquirers. In some groups the original inquiry question was changed considerably and in some it was only slightly modified. In one instance the question was not changed, but the intent changed markedly. Each group crafted its inquiry question to reflect specific interests and identity. Despite the initiators' early attempts to formulate a question, the groups insisted on owning the inquiry on their terms.

Collaborative inquiry presupposes that all participants enter the process on a level playing field, that is, all are on an equal footing with regard to the issue being investigated; everyone has a stake in the process, which provides opportunities for group and individual learning. Diversity, respected and valued by the participants, facilitates learning. This has been evidenced in the peer counselors' group through the telling of stories that have helped to bond the group through commonalities of experience across cultural settings, in the academic groups in which the diversity of disciplines enrich the discussions, and in the group on technologies in which a variety of professional experiences stimulate new and creative approaches to problems.

From this sense of respect and inclusion, we find that collaborative inquiry provides a vehicle for understanding, confronting, and possibly healing the disjunctures created by bureaucracy. The secondary school group members see themselves as affirming and recognizing the importance of their own practice in the classroom in ways not previously acknowledged. The group inquiring into intuition can at last affirm intuition as a way of knowing; participants have been aware of its importance in their personal and academic lives, but intuition as an aspect of knowing has rarely been given credence in academic settings. These two groups' experiences illustrate how the group inquiry process, by providing validation of the issue being studied, is a humanizing and legitimate platform for individuals and small groups within institutional settings.

The five of us in thINQ struggle individually and in our inquiry groups with the issue of leadership. We range in our actions from a laissez-faire approach to more directive facilitation. Each of us responds to the ebb and flow of leadership as required by circumstances. There is a tension between not wanting to lead the group in a predetermined direction and not wanting to allow the group to wander aimlessly. In some cases we have tried to "wean" the group away from our initial

roles as facilitators, exemplified by the inquiry on student responsibility for learning. The group began to lose momentum until one of the initiators accepted responsibility for leadership and began to play a stronger facilitator's role. There seems to be a continued need for some facilitation and that role has remained with the initiators of the groups. As facilitators within our field groups we try to achieve a balance through intuitive knowing and questioning the group's verbal and nonverbal clues, with ongoing reflection and discussion of the inquiry process, simultaneously concentrating on the inquiry topic. The facilitator's role extends beyond advocacy to include mutual support, opportunities for self-disclosure, and the challenging of assumptions.

Collaborative inquiry provides an opportunity for co-inquirers to create liberating structures. While collaborative inquiry is time-consuming and labor-intensive, these qualities permit change; frozen attitudes may thaw and individual expression can develop. Some of the groups see themselves as communities who are interdependent in the exploration of compelling issues previously ignored. There is some indication that collaborative inquiry encourages innovation and resists the constraints and routines of established bureaucracies while creating new alliances that present constructive challenges to formal structures. The group inquiring into new technologies is providing leadership in exploring the humanizing of technological instruction. The peer counselors see their roles as educators not only of their clients but of professional health workers, a new role that builds a sense of dignity and provides a liberating structure.

As our groups continue to engage in collaborative inquiry, our data and our findings are enriched. Here we present our initial attempts to make meaning of this emergent source of learning which, as adult educators, we believe holds great promise for practitioners in the field.

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## THE RHETORIC OF LEADERSHIP IN THE HISTORY OF ADULT EDUCATION: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE ACCEPTANCE OF WOMEN AS LEADERS

Melody M. Thompson

Although early histories of the field recognized women as leaders of adult education, later histories minimized or ignored their leadership activities. What have been the mechanisms of women's invisibility in adult education history? This study investigates issues of language and power that contribute to an understanding of this question.

Historians have advanced a number of explanations for the invisibility of women in written history. Three that seem particularly appropriate to an examination of women as leaders in adult education—biased data sources, the circle effect, and professionalization—have been examined by other historians.<sup>1</sup> A fourth perspective, which centers on issues of language, is explored here as a means of integrating the social and professional forces apparent in the other three, particularly in the explanation based on the drive to professionalize the field of adult education.

### *Methodology*

This investigation uses critical linguistic analysis to investigate the relationship between the rhetoric of leadership and the historical invisibility of women as leaders. Analysis of discourse samples proceeds in three stages: description, concerned with formal properties of the text; interpretation, concerned with the interaction of discourse participants (producers/readers) with the text; and explanation, concerned with the relationship between linguistic interactions and social context.<sup>2</sup>

Samples for this research come from field-sponsored literature written between 1926, the year from which the history of adult education as a recognized, self-conscious field of practice is generally measured, and 1962, the year in which Malcolm Knowles's *The Adult Education Movement in the United States* was published. This literature was analyzed to identify linguistic factors that have contributed to the historical invisibility of women leaders, particularly in terms of a text-created professional environment that may have impeded the acceptance or recognition of women as leaders both by themselves and by others.

### Language and Power in the Literature: Description and Interpretation

Norman Fairclough, in *Language and Power*, contends that linguistic conventions are the product of relations of power; they "incorporate differences of power" and "they arise out of—and give rise to—particular relations of power." The conventions by which people linguistically interact are based on common-sense, often unconscious, assumptions. Such assumptions—cultural ideologies—are embedded in the everyday forms of language. Dale Spender suggests that because "...historically—and currently—men have held greater 'rights' to language," language issues are central to the study of power relationships between men and women. The use of sexist language may be viewed as one way of perpetuating a male-as-norm/female-as-exception perspective.<sup>3</sup>

#### Description: The Language of Leadership

It has been suggested that our language gives us no words with which to naturally include women of achievement or power<sup>4</sup>; it does, however, give us many ways to exclude such women. The literature of adult education provides numerous examples of exclusionary linguistic conventions including the assumption of maleness, the generic "he," and metaphors of power.



*Assumption of Maleness-Common Terms.* Some words (e.g. "man-linked" words such as statesman, chairman, committeeman) are overtly exclusionary; other examples of the "male-as-norm" rule are more covert in their contributions to women's linguistic invisibility. Often words or phrases without obvious linguistic gender markings are used as if referring only to men. The following example illustrates how authors, when writing common terms that could in principle apply to men or women (e.g. "student"), simply assume a reference to men:

If the student has not already met his teachers, he will be anxious to do so at once. If there are books or other supplies to buy he will want to know how to do it and where....Having finished his own registration, *his wife* may now wish to select an interesting course.<sup>5</sup> (my emphasis)

*Assumption of Maleness-Professional Terms.* Professional terms are seldom perceived as neutral. Their masculine nature is assumed by their primary association with male referents (the generic "he") and with the perception in most people's minds that such occupational titles, although in principle referring to both men and women, in practice refer to males. This example from *Adult Leadership* discusses the personality difficulties of a researcher in terms that initially could be perceived as generic (i.e. the man=the person), but that in reality assume that the researcher is male:

The man with research ambition must be an individualist, independent and original, who can use his native abilities best and most happily when he is free to do as he chooses.

Now then, what will happen if he is married to a dominating and socially conforming woman?<sup>6</sup>

Professional terms-administrator, authority, principal, businessman, politician, teacher, expert-are generally accompanied by male referents (he, his, etc.) in the adult education literature. The few exceptions to the rule of generic usage relate to people in traditionally female roles. Thus, while the terms leader, professional, expert, administrator, and professor are overwhelmingly followed by a generic "he," the terms typist, librarian, and elementary teacher are accompanied by "she."

*The Generic "He."* The generic "he" or "man" is used as a referent to both man-linked and unmarked antecedents. The reader of the adult education literature on leadership is inundated with such generics. The occasional use of "man or woman", or "he or she," more common in the early literature, only serves to highlight the frequency with which one encounters these generics. This description of an adult education leader, found in the field's professional journal, *Adult Education*, provides a representative example of the language of leadership in the adult education literature:

*He* is the type of person who is *himself* a student, engaged in a program of self-improvement through liberalizing studies which constantly expand *his* understanding of the nature of *man* and *his* world. *He* is an administrator who understands the major prerequisites for effective program planning are interest and an inquiring mind which constantly seeks insights into the nature of the adult-*his* needs, ambitions, fears, problems, and expectations.<sup>7</sup>

*Metaphors of Power.* Military, religious, and, later, scientific metaphors are common in the adult education literature relating to leadership. We read, for example, that the "happiest type of administrator is he who is a natural-born infantryman, with an affinity for the front-line trenches" and that "the role of the professional adult educator...is like the role of the 'regulars' in the U. S. Armed Forces in 1939." Other literature discusses adult education as "in a very real sense... a religious question": "People have been moved...to rise and profess their faith in this new tool of social salvation." Later readers are presented with the image of adult education as a rocket:

"In this adult education rocket of ours man is the cap...the rocket's fuel is the manpower required to carry on adult education."<sup>8</sup>

#### Interpretation: The Interaction of Author/text/reader

These examples from the adult education literature have been characterized as "exclusionary." Such a statement assumes that authors and readers may not perceive such language as pertaining to and including both men and women. What evidence exists for such an assumption?

Both the comments of early observers of language and society<sup>9</sup> and evidence from research studies with various populations suggest that sexist language is *not* viewed as referring equally to women and to men. In studies of the effect of man-linked words and the generic he, writers/speakers and readers/listeners, both male and female, were more likely to perceive the referents of these supposedly generic words as male. Other linguistic research suggests that exposure to and use of such linguistic conventions may have serious psychological or social consequences by limiting girls' or women's attitudes related to achievement motivation, perseverance, and level of aspiration.<sup>10</sup> Slack, in a historical examination of the metaphors of power associated with leadership, argues that they arise out of a gender-specific and culture-specific framework that supports a view of men as the leaders of a society. Certainly the church, the military, and science are all areas traditionally associated with male leadership; using metaphors from these fields to describe the characteristics necessary in a leader may make forming an association between women and leadership difficult, if not impossible.<sup>11</sup>

The research findings combine to suggest that, although male readers might easily have felt a sense of identification with the descriptions of leaders presented in the adult education literature, female readers, even in roles identical to those being discussed, may have found such identification problematic. If, as Spender argues, our language "daily and deliberately denies one's humanity," if it structures "a sexist world in which women are assigned a subordinate place,"<sup>12</sup> then it is not unreasonable to suggest that language may make it difficult for women to formulate positive individual or professional definitions of themselves; it may be equally difficult for men to accept the idea of women in positions other than a subordinate one.

#### **Explanation: From Vision to Reality**

The focus to this point on sexist language, while highlighting its pervasive and exclusive nature, may have obscured the degree to which the language of leadership and its relationship to women changed over time. Thus a second goal of this research is to relate the changes in both ideas about leadership and ideas about women as leaders—as reflected in the rhetoric of leadership literature—to changes in the field of adult education.

#### An Inclusive Vision

Much of the rhetoric of the field before World War II is characterized by statements of what adult education and adult educators should be, ought to be, must be. In other words, this language was intended to project a *vision*. It is apparent that many supporters of the movement believed their vision to be based on an already-emerging social reality that included equal status for women. This belief is reflected in the image of traditional ideas about women's roles and about education for adults as "a rich deposit of the mental habits of a past period, preserved for us intact in the amber of a stupid phrase" and in the comment that arguments about the inferiority of women, "so firmly rooted in deep feeling in our grandparents day, are on the dust heap now." The idea of women as leaders seems to have been accepted by some of the movement's early supporters: authors wrote matter of factly of "men and women of superior talents"

taking advantage of graduate training, discussed "the placement possibilities for men and women...to teach adult students or to organize and administer adult education," and praised the contributions to the field of individual women leaders.<sup>13</sup>

The comparatively egalitarian stance toward women apparent in the earlier literature does not seem to have been a reflection of prevailing social attitudes, however. As feminist historians have documented, popular culture, the pronouncements of "experts" such as psychiatrists, and the ideas of most male and female laypersons continued to reflect and perpetuate long-held beliefs of women's "proper place."<sup>14</sup> Webster Cotton's "vigorous but visionary intellects" who provided adult education with its initial philosophical impetus were indeed the odd ones out in terms of ideas about women's roles. This incongruity between the ideas of the intellectual leaders of the field and those of both the larger educational context and society in general was but one example of a more extensive value incompatibility, an incompatibility that has had profound consequences both on the development of the field of adult education and on the status of women within the field.

### An Exclusive Reality

By the 1940s, the adult education literature had begun to take on a more "professional" tone. The emphasis among many professional adult educators shifted from a focus on *should* to a focus on *is*, from attempts to articulate and implement a vision to efforts to understand, describe, and work within a sometimes indifferent, sometimes hostile reality. By the early 1950s the movement that early supporters had lauded as "that mighty regenerating conception" as powerful and as natural as the law of gravity was being described as an idea that had "failed notoriously, blithely, and tragically to make an important contribution to the enlightenment of our democracy."<sup>15</sup> A few observers ascribed this failure to excessive emphasis on professionalization; most of those contributing to the literature, however, seemed to believe that only *increased* professionalization could salvage the field as one of position and influence.

As a result of their failure to firmly establish themselves on their own terms, adult educators found themselves forced to contend with a contextual reality embodied in the image of "marginality." By the late 1940s, through the 1950s, and into the 1960s, efforts to overcome marginality were reflected in articles promoting standards for training and an improved professional organization as means to upgrade the practice, income, and status—and thus the professional credibility—of adult educators.

Increasing pressure to ensure "[g]eneral recognition of adult education as a field in the science of education" <sup>16</sup> led to an increased interest in and study of leadership and power within small groups, institutions, and communities. Development of an effective image as a provider of a unique, recognizable, and valuable educational commodity depended on an understanding by adult educators of the power relationships that operated both among themselves and within their relatively hostile environment. Thus, within the professionalizing field, the reality, rather than the vision, of leadership became the object of study and debate.

As the field attempted to reflect the reality it studied, as it consciously attempted to bring its values into congruence with those of the larger educational community in order "to curtail criticism" and "achieve stature professionally,"<sup>17</sup> leadership discourse took on an increasingly male tone and focus. The image of women in the literature began to reflect both the reality of women's decreasing leadership within the larger educational context and the naturalistic view of women dominant in American society at the time.

Within the literature, reports on research studies of group leadership, surveys of institutional leadership, and investigations into community power relationships combined to provide adult educators with the information they needed "to understand the power structure of the organization or community within which they may work..." in order to plan programs "consistent with the existing structure." Women were virtually non-existent in these discussions of leadership and power hierarchies. Research



studies were usually conducted with male subjects, institutional leadership was reported to be predominantly, sometimes exclusively, male, and community power hierarchies were described as "men going about the business of moving other men to act."<sup>18</sup>

The weakening of the association between women and leadership is reflected not only in women's exclusion from articles discussing the newer, power-oriented leadership but also in a form of sex-role stereotyping particularly evident in the practitioners' journal and in the continued, even heightened, pervasiveness of sexist language in all leadership literature. In *Adult Leadership*, women as well as men are referred to as leaders and their leadership activities are reported. However, the areas in which women are shown to be leaders and the language in which their activities are reported result in a picture of women doing less important things in less serious-minded ways than men.

One article, for example, provides vignettes of different organizations and the motivations of those operating therein. In the first two, a large oil company and a trade union—both assumed to be male contexts—objectives are discussed in terms of "control," "political forces," "power needs," and "power interests." In the third organization, "a voluntary fund-raising committee composed of fashionable ladies," objectives are discussed in terms of the leader's unbalanced psychological make-up: "Of course she...doesn't want [assistance]! If anybody is going to interfere with her public masochism, she'll just go home. Her real objective is to unload her neurosis."<sup>19</sup>

Another article hypothesizes on the thoughts of four club leaders, two men and two women, as they mentally review the events of a recent organizational meeting. The men ponder issues of group cohesion, participation, programming, and strategy. One of the women thinks about her attraction to the club chairman and her discomfort with the technical information discussed; the other thinks about how her husband needs a haircut and a new suit, and about how his characterization of the club as a "jungle" and its members as "predatory" scares her.<sup>20</sup>

## Conclusion

As the field of adult education developed, it defined and maintained itself largely through texts. One aspect of this definition was the meaning of leadership: texts constructed a version of the reality of leadership in adult education and served as linguistic expressions of the social and professional forces acting on and within the field. This research has provided evidence that the language used to describe and prescribe the qualities of leaders, by mirroring and perpetuating gender-related roles and power relationships prevalent in the larger society, made it increasingly difficult both for women to view themselves and for men to view women as leaders or potential leaders of adult education.

It is unlikely that the linguistic exclusion of women from the leadership literature was a deliberate strategy in the effort to improve the image of the field of adult education. However, a congruence in values between the field of adult education and that of the larger educational and social contexts clearly could not be built on an egalitarian conception of women as leaders. As expediency and accommodation became the guiding principles of the professionalization of adult education, the perception of women as major actors became untenable and their portrayal as a supporting cast more inevitable. The more women were excluded from the language of leadership or were portrayed as leaders only in traditionally female contexts, the more tenuous became the association between power and importance and women, and the less likely their appearance as leaders in histories of adult education.

## Notes

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# POWER RELATIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION CLASSES OF NONTRADITIONAL-AGE ADULTS: ISSUES OF GENDER, RACE AND CLASS

by Elizabeth J. Tisdell

**Abstract:** This qualitative comparative case study examined how power relationships predominantly based on gender but including race, class, and age were manifested in higher education classrooms of nontraditional-age adult students.

Power relationships based on gender, race, and class are present everywhere in society. The role of adult education in changing unequal power relationships in society is currently being debated by adult educators and those interested in emancipatory education. In order to contribute to that debate, the purpose of this study was to determine how power relationships predominantly based on gender, but including such factors as race, class, and age were supported and reproduced, and/or challenged and resisted in higher education classes made up of nontraditional-age adults.

## RELATED LITERATURE

Virtually all the critical pedagogy or emancipatory education literature has been influenced by Freire (1971). But feminists have been critical of Freire because he has tended to group all forms of oppression into the same category of class-based oppression; he doesn't attend to oppression based on race, gender, age, or sexual orientation. Feminist critiques of the critical pedagogy literature have given rise to the feminist emancipatory education literature which has been influenced by several bodies of literature in addition to Freire. Some of it addresses the role of education in reproducing unequal power relations based on gender, race, and class (Apple, 1986; Collins, 1991; Hooks, 1989). Some of it explores the strategies used by individuals and sub-groups in education to resist maintaining the imposition of the ideology of the hegemonic culture (Weller, 1988). Another influence is the feminist pedagogy literature which focuses on how to teach for women's empowerment emphasizing that women do best in learning environments of connected teaching and learning (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule, 1986).

Research examining issues related to power relations in higher education classes is limited. Most studies have been conducted in classrooms of traditional-age students (Boyer, 1987; Hall, 1982; Statham, Richardson, and Cook, 1991). Findings suggest that men receive more attention than women, female professors encourage more classroom interaction, and the curricular materials reflect predominantly the white male experience. However, in a study that focused on the amount of class participation of men and women in continuing education classes of nontraditional-age students, Roehl and Strickler (1991) found that women who were in their mid-30s to mid-40s reported being more vocal than the men of the same age.

The literature dealing with power relations based on gender and race in the field of adult education is minimal, although more recent literature suggests that feminist analyses are beginning to have an influence on the field (Colin & Preciphs, 1991; Collard & Stalker, 1991; Hugo, 1989; Hart, 1992). This study which is informed by feminist-materialism (Roman & Apple, 1990) is an attempt to contribute to that emerging influence.

## METHODOLOGY

This study was an ethnographic comparative case study of two master's-level counseling classes made up of nontraditional-age adult students, chosen primarily because these professors, unlike several others who were approached, gave easy access to their classes. One class, taught by a white male ("Charles"), focused on career counseling, and was made up of 17 students--12 women and five men. The students were mostly white and

middle class. One was an upperclass Asian-American male; two women were from working-class backgrounds. The other class, taught by a white female ("Anne"), focused on rehabilitation counseling, and was made up of 13 students--seven women and six men. One woman was African-American and one was from an upperclass family; the rest were white and middle-class.

The primary means of data collection were audio-taped participant observations of nearly all the classes. Interviews of faculty members and several students from each class, and document analysis of curricular materials were additional sources of data. Data were analyzed throughout the study according to the constant comparative method. Validity and reliability were enhanced through triangulation of data collection methods, long term observation, and member checks with each of the faculty members and some of the students (Lather, 1991).

### FINDINGS

While there are power relations built into the structure of higher education itself (teacher-student and faculty member-institution), higher education classrooms can challenge and resist, or reinforce and reproduce the structured power relations of society based on gender, race, and class. Both professors and students play a role in this.

#### **The Professorial Role: Forms of Resistance**

The two professors found ways to resist maintaining the structured power relations of society and of higher education within the confines of their professorial role. There were three primary categories of resistance.

Setting up the Environment: Power Sharing. Both professors set up the seating arrangements in their classrooms in a large square so everyone could see each other thus placing less emphasis on the teacher's authority role than a traditional classroom arrangement would have. Both professors allowed students to have some say over the course requirements by re-negotiating the syllabus with their students. In addition, Anne invited students to call her by her first name, divesting herself of some power, and allowed students to have more control in the overall class discussion than Charles.

Valuing Affective Forms of Knowledge. The form of knowledge that has been most valued by institutions of higher education is rational or linear knowledge. Both professors valued knowledge that comes with life experience, or "affective knowledge" and modeled the fact that this also has a place in the academy. Both used stories, either of themselves or of people or cases they have known, to illustrate how the course content related to the lives of real people. Such tactics on the part of each of the professors validated the more "subjective" forms of knowledge that come from cognitive reflection on experience.

Affirmation of Women and Minorities. These professors also resisted maintaining structured power relations in their direct affirmation of women and minorities. Both were equally affirming to their male and female students. Charles made several passing remarks about the wage gap between men and women, and the fact that different racial groups have different chances in the workplace. He also reframed students' use of sexist language.

Anne's presence in the classroom and her full professor status in the academy resists maintaining the idea that white males have a monopoly on knowledge production, and serves as an affirmation of women and an important role model for her students. The course content of Anne's class was also devoted to dealing directly with power relations between a dominant (those without disabilities) and an oppressed group (those with disabilities).

#### **The Professorial Role: Forms of Reproduction**

The fact that there were so few minority students of any kind, and only two self-identified students from working-class backgrounds in the study, is a statement in itself about the fact that higher education exists for the

benefit of the dominant culture--the white middle-class. But professors contributed to reproducing power relations in other ways as well.

Teacher Control. Both professors had the power to decide whether or not to share power and decided what they were and were not willing to negotiate. Charles controlled more classroom discussion than Anne, singling students out to make comments, and always stood during large group discussions. He never introduced himself; therefore students addressed him using the title "doctor." As noted earlier, Anne invited students to call her by her first name, and her physical posture indicated more of a willingness to share power. She stood when she was using the board, but sat more often during class discussions. While she also ultimately had control over class discussion as well, her class was more interactive.

Curricular Emphasis on Males. The curriculum in both classes emphasized the male experience more than the female experience. The personal characteristics of Charles as a white, uppermiddle-class male in a position of authority contributes to the reproduction of society's power relations. In addition, almost all of the stories Charles told to illustrate points were about males. The absence of stories about females became particularly apparent when he made a passing remark about his daughter during the last week of class, which was the first and only reference to a daughter (there had been several references to his sons). Charles was also more attentive and informal with the male students, teasing them more and making it a point to single out the quieter male members of the class to a much greater degree than the quieter female members of the class.

The curricular emphasis on males in Anne's class was manifested in the materials used in the class. In the primary text used and in the videos shown to the class, men were generally portrayed in much more powerful positions than were the women. In one of the videos shown there were no females at all.

#### **The Student Role: Forms of Resistance**

Students play an equally important role in determining the nature of power relations. There were three primary categories of student resistance.

Resistance to Teacher Authority. Some students resisted maintaining the power disparity between themselves and the instructor in Anne's class. While students were respectful of Anne's role and her extensive knowledge base, they argued with and debated issues with her on several occasions. However, the students in Charles's class asked questions of clarification, but at no time when I was present did they directly argue points with him.

Bringing Up Gender and Racial Issues. Students occasionally brought up gender and racial issues for discussion. This happened more often in Anne's class. Students in her class brought up issues of privilege and oppression quite often, drawing parallels between advocacy work for people with disabilities and the Civil Rights and Feminist Movements. They tended to focus on structural problems and indicated more of an awareness of the political implications of dealing with these issues than did Charles' students.

Greater Active Participation of Women. The women in Charles's class were much more participatory and interactive than the men, asking far more questions and making slightly more comments. In Anne's class the women were only slightly more vocal. More of the questions and comments were initiated by women in their mid-30s to mid-40s, although the single most vocal class member in each class was a younger woman.

#### **The Student Role: Forms of Reproduction**

The students' behavior contributed to reproducing the structured power relations of higher education and of society in significant ways. In general, they were deferential to their instructors, more to Charles than to Anne.



There were also two additional categories of student reproduction of the structured power relations of society.

Greater Influence of More Privileged Students. The students that benefitted by more systems of interlocking privilege (based primarily on gender and class) had more of an influence on the classes as a whole. Al, a 23 year old Asian-American male, had a very strong influence on Charles's class. This became apparent early on when in a small group exercise, Al sat on the table, while the four other students (all women) sat in a line in front of Al and directed all their remarks to him. His dominant role continued throughout the quarter, and he served as the comedy leader. Al was cited by two-thirds of the students interviewed from the class as someone that stood out to them, indicating his strong influence on the large group as well. While Al was the only racial minority, he was also the only student from an upperclass background, and was extremely bright and quick witted, and thus was privileged in many significant ways, despite his minority status.

By contrast, the student that had the least influence in Charles's class in both the small group and the large group was Karen, a 34 year-old woman from a working-class family background. She was neither overly quiet nor overly vocal but she did make several valuable contributions to both large group and small group discussions. However, her remarks, particularly in the small group, were not picked up on. Out of the ten students interviewed, Karen was mentioned the least often (only once) as someone that would stand out, and six out of the ten students could not remember who she was when they first looked at the student list.

In Anne's class, nearly all of the students interviewed saw Elizabeth, who identified her class background as upper-class, as the social leader. Some students identified Bill, a 25 year-old white uppermiddle-class male as the intellectual leader; other students identified Anita, a woman in her mid-40s who had some experience in the rehabilitation field as the intellectual leader. Interestingly, only one student identified Suzanne, an African-American woman in her late 40s who had the most experience in rehabilitation, including 27 years experience in nursing, as the intellectual leader. Thus in both classes the students that had the most influence were students who benefit from more systems of interlocking structural privilege based on gender, race, class, age, and experience.

Reification of Patriarchal Values. Students contributed to reproducing structured power relations in their reification of patriarchal values. This was manifested in their use of sexist and diminutive language (calling an adult woman "a girl"). It was also apparent in their greater valuing of men's work, manifested in the fact that students reported to the large group only what males in their families had done when asked for some interesting occupations in their family histories. It was also apparent in the "gender appropriateness" of what students reported being most proud of. The males reported accomplishments, such as getting into a PhD program, or being selected as the teacher of the year, whereas the females mentioned either relational accomplishments, such as being happily married, or adopting children, or both relational and non-relational accomplishments. In addition, some of the men disapproved of some of the women's efforts, particularly on the part of the younger women, to be class leaders. This was more apparent in Charles's class than in Anne's. All of the men but none of the women I interviewed indicated that they found Jennifer, a 23 year-old woman and the most vocal class member, irritating. Further, two of the men interviewed juxtaposed her comments and behavior with what they considered the greater appropriateness of their own or specifically other male students' comments. In sum, all the examples cited above show how patriarchal values were

reified by the students, contributing to reproducing structured power relations, particularly with regards to gender relations.

#### DISCUSSION

Findings from this study of power relations in adult classes must be interpreted with caution. First, both professors allowed access to their classes suggesting they were probably more secure than many professors, both with how they would be perceived and with how they actually deal with power relations based on gender, race, and class. Second, the fact that these were counseling classes may account for the greater valuing of affective knowledge than might be the case in other disciplines, which may also partially account for why the women were generally more vocal than the men in the study. As Belenky et al. (1986) note, women come to know and learn the most effectively in environments that blend theory with life experience--that emphasize what they call "connected knowing." The fact that the women were more vocal, particularly the women in their 30s and 40s lending support to the Roehl-Strickler (1991) study, may also be due to the fact that these were nontraditional-age women who, as graduate students, have already experienced some success in the higher education system.

While there are limitations to the study, the findings suggest some tentative conclusions about power relations in higher education classrooms of nontraditional-age students. First, some of the differences in power dynamics in the two classes are due to differences in the professors' behavior (eg., Anne's use of her first name along with her more relaxed posture; Charles's greater control), but some are probably also due to the different expectations that students have of male and female professors. Because women as a group have less structural power than men, students may be more willing to make comments and debate with female professors. This would corroborate with the Statham, Richardson, and Cook (1991) study which found that female professors were less authoritarian and their classes more interactive.

Second, the students who benefitted from interlocking systems of structural privilege tended to have more influence in the class from the perspective of their peers than the students who had less interlocking privilege. Interlocking privilege is based on a multitude of factors that give one privileged status in our society, including being white, male, uppermiddle-class, intelligent, and heterosexual (Collins, 1991). The fact that students with the greatest interlocking privilege had the most influence in the classroom most likely reflects their more structural influence in society.

Third, as others have suggested (Collard & Stalker, 1991; Colin & Preciphs, 1991), it is clear that both the overt and the hidden curriculum still favors the white male experience. While there were some references to women's experience, there was a greater emphasis on the white male experience in the curricular materials used in Anne's class, and in Charles's class nearly all examples used to illustrate points were about males.

Based on the results of the study, it appears that power relations in classrooms and in society are challenged only to the extent that teachers and students are proactive in challenging them. Hooks (1989) notes that education can only be liberatory or emancipatory "if it is truly revolutionary because the mechanisms of appropriation within white-supremacist, capitalist patriarchy are able to co-opt with tremendous ease that which merely appears radical or subversive" (p. 51). Anne's whole course was about dealing with the population of people with disabilities, and students had to actively engage with course content about structural privilege and oppression between those who are able-bodied and those who have disabilities. Students recognized the political implications of this. Charles and Anne made passing remarks about gender and race issues but there were no required readings about these issues so students did not have to grapple with them in any

significant way. When I asked students in interviews if they saw any political implications to Charles' or Anne's teaching none of the students made reference to their remarks about gender or race issues, although students in Anne's class mentioned people with disabilities. Thus while Charles and Anne may have been somewhat subversive in their remarks with regards to gender and race, such remarks were probably co-opted by the power of the hegemonic discourse (Hooks, 1989).

Feminist-materialist emancipatory educators argue that educational theory, practice, and research cannot be separated (Lather, 1991; Roman & Apple, 1990). Both Charles and Anne reported altering some of their teaching strategies after reading the results of the study, suggesting that the research affected their later practice. While the findings of this study are limited, the findings of continued studies of power dynamics in classes of nontraditional-age adult students guided by a similar theoretical framework may contribute to the development of a feminist emancipatory adult education theory. The development of such a theory would inform teaching and research practice, and may contribute to teaching strategies that more directly deal with these issues. Practice generates theory and theory guides further teaching and research practice. It is a mutually informing relationship, and may contribute to the emancipation of ourselves and our students.

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**ADULT EDUCATION AND WORKING WOMEN:  
A PERSPECTIVE ON THE LIFE AND WORK OF  
EVA VOM HANSL**

Kimberly A. Townsend

This paper presents an historical review of working women from colonial times through World War II and links working women and adult education through the work of Eva vom Hansl.

Columbia University economist Eli Ginzberg once commented that of "all the events affecting Western societies, changes in female employment patterns--not the Atomic Bomb, not the Russian Revolution--had proved most revolutionary" (in Sealander, 1983, p. 6). Today, women make up an ever-increasing proportion of workforce and continue to enter jobs which have been traditionally held by men. In the past, research on working women has largely focused on men's employment with some investigators extrapolating the results to women (Larwood, Stromberg, & Gutek, 1985). The study of working women is a growing area of research; however, its importance has not been adequately addressed by the field of adult education. This combined with the growing realization of the neglect of women in the dominant histories of the field (Hugo, 1990; Rockhill, 1976), leads to a unique opportunity for research.

This paper explores the world of working women and reveals the contributions of a woman who links the field of adult education to the lives of women workers: Eva vom Hansl. The research begins with a historical review of the patterns of women's work in the United States from the colonial period to the years following the end of World War II. The World War II period provides insight into one of the most revolutionary moments in labor history, social cultural change, and women's access to nontraditional roles.

Eva vom Hansl was well-aware of the changing patterns of women's employment. She kept an extensive file of news clippings, journal articles, government reports and other documentation which spanned a period of 50 years. Hansl has had little recognition from the field of adult education; however, her work indicates a broad range of educational activities including radio broadcasting, lecturing, dramatization, and writing. Her research on the discontinuity of employment for women resulted in one of the first publications to advocate part-time work for women. As an adult educator, Hansl worked to raise the consciousness of women and the awareness of all people about the changing roles of women and their impact on society. This study not only highlights the contributions of Hansl but focuses on the subject of working women as an important field of study for adult educators.

**The Changing Patterns  
of Women's Employment**

In 1920 when the United States Women's Bureau was formed to improve the conditions of working women, Secretary of Labor, William Wilson wrote, "We are safeguarding the mothers of tomorrow; all will agree that women in industry would not exist in an ideal scheme" (Sealander, 1983, p. 3). In reality, Wilson's ideal scheme had never existed. Women had worked in a variety of occupations since the founding of the nation. During the colonial period, women worked as millers, lawyers, pewterers, shipwrights, and shopkeepers. The combination of economic necessity and the lack of requirements for formal training enabled women a freedom in the workplace (Sealander, 1983). However, by the early 1800s, women were restricted to only a few occupations, and the majority of working women were domestic servants, tobacco processors, and garment workers. According to



Sealand, 70% of the working women were domestic servants in 1870. By 1920 the percentage had fallen to 18% while factory employment for women rose to 23.8%. Public concern began in the 19th century when philanthropists and social activists who saw working women as a risk to themselves and society (Sealand, 1983).

From 1890 to 1930 the overall proportion of working women grew 33% (Rury, 1991). By the 1920s about half of the women over 20 had worked at some point in their lives. In the early twentieth century, new occupations opened for middle-class women who became saleswomen, phone operators, and clerks. The number of white collar jobs grew to 40% of the female workforce by 1930. But for working-class women with little education, the opportunities for employment were limited to domestic service and factories (Kennedy, 1979).

The Depression Era marked a setback for working women as they competed with men for scarce jobs. The amount paid in salaries for all workers dropped 40% and wages dropped 60% from 1929. According to the American Federation of Labor, 13 million Americans were unemployed during this period (Allen, 1939). During the Depression, women, just as men, found it very difficult to get jobs. However, they had an additional burden. Vaguely formed public images of the women worker "crystallized into a caricature" as millions experienced panic and unemployment (Sealand, 1983, p. 56). A working woman was a villain invading the labor market to steal jobs from indigent men. Public opinion did not support working women and both legislators and employers sought to forbid married women the right to work. Section 213 of the 1932 Federal Economic Act required one spouse (typically the wife) to resign if both were federally employed. The private sector followed suit (Wector, 1966).

Significant changes occurred for women during the Depression. The first world war had changed the face of the labor force and as Wector (1966) reports in his research on American life "nearly eleven million women worked outside the home during the Depression" (p. 25). During World War I, women were expected to work as part of their service to their country. But many women who entered the workforce decided to stay after the war was over. Society in general, and specifically unemployed men, found women's new roles hard to accept. Wector writes that women workers were assumed to be "filching some male bread winners jobs for the sake of pin money to augment the family's sumptuary margin" (p. 25). An unorganized and largely powerless group, women workers routinely labored for low wages in repetitive jobs, often in unsanitary conditions (Rosen, 1989). The decade of the 1930s signaled hard times for women workers, who even as professionals earned half a man's wages. By 1940, the nation was gradually recovering from the Depression. Twenty-seven percent of all women over 14 were in the labor force and of these about one-fifth were unemployed (Schweitzer, 1980). This was to change with America's entry into World War II. The economy absorbed the 5 million formerly unemployed and employers found an untapped labor supply in women (Kennedy, 1979).

### **Women "Manning" the Homefront Arsenal**

Overnight, the events of Pearl Harbor changed the caricature of women workers as evil job stealers to "an angel, loyally staffing the home front arsenal of democracy" (Sealand, 1983, p. 95). During the war, women in the labor force more than doubled. However, Gatlin (1987) points out that it was not due to any radical change in societal attitude but strictly to economic need. The debate over the proper activities for women during the war "highlighted the competing visions of a woman's place in American society" (Sherman, 1990, p. 52). Women were told they were ideally suited, physically and mentally, for war work (Kennedy, 1979). Mass publicity campaigns rallied women to the workforce with posters of "Rosie the Riveter" and

"Wanda the Welder", with a call for women to "take their place in the world economy" (p. 6).

The nature of the jobs and the settings suggested profound change, and women could now measure themselves against men, whose work had always been valued. But the kind of work they did had implications for the definition of womanhood. Even the attire changed to provide more freedom of movement (Gluck, 1982). The mass entry of women in to the workforce necessitated new policies and training programs. Women were not only given instruction in their new skills but also in how to dress and act. The women were told how to wear their hair and "cautioned about the wearing of tight sweaters" (Kennedy, 1979, p. 191). One manager reported that the pertinent social issues were the toilet facilities and the need for an older woman to counsel the younger women workers.

The composition of the working women force during the war was vastly different from just a few years before. The majority of working women in the past had been young, single, and of the working class, while the women workers of wartime were on the average older, married, and had grown children. In the 1930s, 75% of the American public was opposed to married women working outside the home. But public opinion shifted dramatically during the war and 60% approved--at least as a wartime measure (Gatlin, 1987). More revealing than the statistics on female employment were the social questions raised and the efforts by business, government, and society to deal with the issues (Kennedy, 1979). In 1942, the War Manpower Commission launched a major publicity campaign aimed to convince women that many of the factory jobs were similar to their domestic skills in the home (Gatlin, 1987). Milkman (1982) reports that wartime propaganda "portrayed women's work as a temporary extension of domesticity" (p. 340).

The workforce had opened its doors to women and their entrance was considered a symbol of patriotic spirit. But as Kennedy (1979) comments, "As Rosie was riveting, she was also ambitious" (p. 190). For the first time women could compare themselves on par with men. They had found new strength and confidence in their abilities (Gluck, 1982). A survey conducted in 1944 of 13,000 working women conducted by the Women's Bureau found that 75% of the women planned to stay in the workforce after the war (Sealand, 1983). Willenz (1983) writes that the "aftermath of war includes an upheaval of the status quo" (p. 5). This creates momentum for societal change and political equality. According to Sherman (1990) war "disrupts traditional patterns and speeds up social change" (p. 58). The changes did not pose a threat to traditional roles but offered women alternatives to the domestic role and the expansion of female employment widened the range of life choices (Rury, 1991). Despite their hopes, the combination of economic conditions and slur campaigns sent over three million women back into their homes (Kennedy, 1979). A new economic prosperity brought the desire for material wealth and an increase in the size of families dictated the women's responsibilities. Women's primary roles, according to society, were those of wife and mother.

### Eva vom Hansl

"Choice" for women was what Eva vom Hansl promoted in every aspect of her work. She commented, "Never has there been such a range of choices open to women. Out of choices new patterns of study, work, and leisure emerge" (1966, p. 50). Her approach to bring about change was based on research and education. She wanted a "campaign for research and action necessary to produce changes" (Hansl, 1949, p. 7). Hansl predicted that more and more women would enter the workforce both for economic and personal reasons. She saw women as overworked yet underworked, unemployed and underutilized (1966, p. 3) and believed that the improvement of the conditions for women meant improvement for society (Hansl, 1949). She wrote, "to think in terms of a life-career is to look upon work as a

constant in a women's life--in the classroom, the home, the labor force, and the community. . . once this concept becomes a part of our education philosophy. . . a new philosophy regarding women's place in our economy will follow as a matter of natural evolution" (in "Are We Throwing Our Women Away?", n.d., p. 18).

As an adult educator, Hansl espoused the essential need for women to be "well-equipped by education, training, and work experience" (in "Education Whenever", n.d., p. 4). To her, that was the only way in which the discrimination against women in advancement and pay would disappear. She promoted higher education for women but questioned whether the recruitment of women by colleges and universities was "honorable. . . or just a response to the decline of veterans. . . women, it would appear are the in-and-outers of the halls of learning" (in "Are We Throwing Our Women Away?", n.d., p. 12). Higher education was not meeting the needs of women. She believed that educators were beginning to ask if the "fault was their for not meeting the needs of their students later in life. . . So the pendulum is swinging far over in the direction of a separate type of education for women, as women" (p. 12). She believed that education must take potential employment into account as well as "satisfactions to be derived from the use of a woman's mind and talents" (in "Education Whenever", n.d., p. 2).

Hansl believed that education of the public about working women would not only help women but men as well. In a proposal for adult education Hansl wrote "When men and women do understand the issues and learn to clear away the confusion resulting from the changing status of women, future generations will be free to fashion new designs of living based upon their own values essential to an integrated and purposeful life" (1952, p. 8).

She used radio as a means of educating the public about women, their work, and their roles in society. Hansl's work in radio promoted the role of women and their strengths. Much of the scripting, interviewing and promotion were accomplished by her. She also promoted listening groups through women organizations (Lobach, 1967, p. 4). "Women in the Making of America" and "Gallant American Women" portrayed women as a political, economic, and social force. The scripts described the obstacles for women and concluded with an interview or speech from a prominent person of the day such as Eleanor Roosevelt, Carrie Chapman Catt, and Pearl Buck (p. 4).

Hansl educated through her writing as well as public broadcasts. She communicated through newspapers, magazines, speeches, and books. Her themes were women and work, women's multiple roles in society; and social and economic conflict of roles. Her book, Trends in Part-Time Employment of College Trained Women used research to suggest "a campaign for research and action necessary to preclude changes in our economy. Women are seen as the vocational link between higher education and the family" (1949, p. 7). Hansl implored women to recognize the issues and create solidarity.

Hansl believed that the greatest urgency for integrated research arose "not only from women themselves who want guidance in making choices and decision in planning their lives, but from society which is beginning to realize the far reaching significance of these choices and decisions by women in shaping the future of the United States" (Hansl & Frank, 1952, p. 6).

### **The Collection**

Out of Hansl's dedication to furthering research evolved her extensive collection on women which "provides a panorama of the health, education, employment, marital roles, and intellectual life of over 60 years. . . There is no area in the life of women that has not been researched, studied in depth and reported through all the printed words and air waves by Eva vom Bauer Hansl" (Syracuse University, 1968).



Hansl admitted that her collection arose out of her own interests. "I write from within the circumference of my own experience--the circumstance that shaped my interests and activities. The scope of my collection is affected by the milieu in which I grew up--a middle income family of German origin, exemplifying the democratic principle" (1966, p. 2). But researchers will find a broad range of activities, events, and experiences of women from all aspects of society. Lobach (1967) commented on the collection, "It has to be seen to be believed--a stunning story of women unfolding through trends, projections, prophecies, and records" (p. 1).

Eva vom Hansl Day was celebrated in 1968. The first papers were received in 1943 and included 47 scripts and radio series. The collection is arranged in 12 series such as Education and Counseling; Occupations; Home and Family; Roles and Attitudes; and History, to name a few. (Syracuse University, 1968, p. 1). Hansl commented "I wish I could see how the events recorded in my collection will turn out. But my philosopher friend reminds me that nothing will ever turn out. It will only turn into something else" (1966, p. 52).

Hansl was a woman of many interests and abilities--much like the women portrayed in her collection and in her radio broadcasts. Lloyd-Jones (1960) said "She has maintained a keen interest in adult education, in changing patterns of women's lives, in vocational guidance, and deserves a great deal of credit for the role she has played in stimulating people to work in these fields" (p. 2). Lobach (1967) wrote of Hansl, "Not many people are granted more than 50 years out of a lifetime to work persistently and stubbornly for one belief". (p. 6).

The increased involvement of women in the workforce will affect policies and work patterns. Adult educators can play a key role in preparing men and women for these changes. As Larwood, Stromberg, and Gutek (1985) point out, "As researchers, we cannot close our eyes to such an important social change" (p. 10). Hansl would have agreed.

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**VOICES REVEALED:**  
**A CASE FOR ORAL HISTORY**  
**IN ADULT EDUCATION RESEARCH**

Kimberly A. Townsend

This paper presents an argument for the use of oral history in adult education research. It discusses the concepts of "voice"; the techniques of oral history; and provides examples of oral history sources.

**Introduction**

The history of adult education has many stories which have yet to be told. In addition, critics of the major annals of adult education history argue that the accounts suffer from race and gender bias. As Hugo (1990) points out "adult education history suffers from gender bias and historians have marginalized or written women out of the historical narrative" (p. 1). Furthermore, since traditional historical methods rely on written documentation, the voices of adults who are illiterate, poor, disadvantaged, disabled, or marginalized may not be revealed. Standard historical methods may not adequately capture the implications of adult education on the lives of these individuals and without their personal accounts, the historical lens becomes distorted.

The purpose of this paper is to present an argument in support of the use of oral history methodology in adult education research. Oral history is gaining increasing support across the academic disciplines. Yet this method remains underutilized in the field of adult education. This paper begins with a discussion of oral history and the concept of "voice" as described by researchers such as Gilligan; Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule; Offen, Pierson, and Rendall; Gluck and Patai; and Walsh. The second part of the paper briefly reviews some techniques of the oral history process, and concludes with a review of how to uncover potential sources of untapped adult education history.

**Oral History and the Concept of "Voice"**

Oral history is the recording of reminiscences from the perspective of first-hand knowledge. The information is captured through preplanned interviews by an interviewer who is already immersed in the subject area. Oblinger (1978) writes that in the past, oral historians have "almost entirely worked with the well-known and famous, ignoring the recollections of more ordinary people" (p. 1). Today, there are more supporters of a grass-roots approach to oral history.

The need for qualified oral historians will continue to grow. As Wilma Baum (1971) notes, oral history is especially important because "people no longer write the long letters, routine diaries, or careful memos that have always served as the bones of historical research and . . . there are many classes of persons who will not set down in writing the description of their life although they may have a very rich oral tradition and may be able to talk with much color and accuracy about this life" (p. 8). Oral history emphasizes the value of a "person's story to the total context and provides interconnections of apparently unconnected phenomena" (Marshall & Rossman, 1989, p. 97).

Oral history comes in various forms, most being biographical in nature. However, some projects are episodic, examining a particular historical event while others are sociological in which the social processes of a distinctive population group

are studied for a specific period of time (Oblinger, 1978). Because the field of adult education is so broad, there are many opportunities for recording histories which have not been revealed through traditional sources, as well as re-examining stories which can be retold from a new perspective--that of the participants themselves. Oral history will not only fill in the gaps of written documentation, but enable the exploration, from a longitudinal perspective, of the impact of adult education experiences on individual lives. For example, literacy efforts could be recorded from the experience of the learner instead of the instructor or administrator; experiences of Native Americans, with their rich oral history tradition could be included in the annals of adult education from their perspective; and women could be placed at the center stage of their own experiences instead of playing subordinate roles. As Gluck (1982) points out "women's history cannot be understood if we rely on sources that only reflect public behavior or the presumed behavior suggested in prescriptive literature" (p. 92).

The use of oral and life history methodology is increasing in popular literature, such as the work of Studs Terkel; in local communities; and across the social science disciplines (Baum, 1971; Marshall & Rossman, 1989). Anthropologists, sociologists, historians, feminist, and minority researchers are finding the methodology a means of uncovering stories which have not been documented (Offen, Pierson, & Rendall, 1991; Spradley, 1979; Walsh, 1991). Oral history can generate new insights by uncovering an individual's perspective. In addition, it can enable researchers to understand and evaluate societal changes by giving people a voice (Spradley, 1980). Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule (1986) found that "voice" was more than an academic shorthand for a person's point of view. In their research, they became aware that it applied to many aspects of women's experiences and that the "development of a sense of voice, mind, and self were intricately intertwined" (p. 18). Gilligan (1982) writes that "the way people talk about their lives is of significance and the connections they make reveal the world that they see and in which they act" (p. 2). Oral histories "create the possibility of going beyond the conventional stories . . . to reveal experience in a less culturally edited form" (Anderson & Jack, 1991, p. 24).

### **Methodology**

Oral narratives refer to the material gathered in the research process while oral history refers to "the whole enterprise: recording, transcribing, editing, and making public the resulting product" (Gluck & Patai, 1991, p. 4). Oral histories do not stand alone but enhance the broader historical study. Although oral history is a major source for learning about people's experiences, it is "not a substitute for doing background research in traditional sources on the group to be interviewed" (Oblinger, 1978, p. 3). The process begins with intensive research of the written sources. Unlike basic interviews in which the interviewee supplies the research through dialogue, oral histories are used to verify data and supply information not found in written sources. The interviewer needs to be immersed in the subject before entering the interview process. This knowledge of the subject also helps to increase the credibility of the researcher during the interview process and leads to a more focused session.

The research begins with a review of secondary sources. This information is further enhanced by exploring the social context of the time period. Amy Rose (1979) points out that there is a distorted history of the field due to a "parochial vision of researchers and the isolation of adult education phenomenon rather than seeing them as a part of other events and circumstances" (p. 14). The secondary sources provide a context for the study, as well as lead to primary sources. Primary sources

refer to first-hand accounts and contemporary records of experts of the events being studied (Merriam & Simpson, 1984, p. 71). The research on the primary written sources provides an opportunity to question what might be missing and what may be revealed through the interviews.

After a review of the written sources, the researcher begins preparing for the interviews. Oblinger (1990) recommends sending a survey to prospective subjects to assess the potential for a reliable and accurate interview. The researcher must make some decisions regarding what information will lead to the most productive interviews. Information from the surveys not only help narrow the pool of prospective interviewees but may provide new information to be explored, and other leads for interviews.

The questions for the surveys and the interviews will evolve with the review of the written sources. The interview questions should be open-ended and rely on *how*, *what*, and *why* questions using a general interview guide (Patton, 1990). The purpose of the open-ended interview is to access the perspective of a person and it begins with the assumption that the "perspective of others is meaningful, knowable, and able to be made implicit" (p. 278). The general interview guide approach involves outlining a set of issues that are to be explored. The guide serves as a basic checklist and presumes there is common information that should be obtained from each person interviewed. A semi-structured interview format will be used in order to provide organization and consistency to the interview process (Patton, 1990). The interviewer remains free to build a conversation spontaneously and establish a conversational style, but with a particular focus that has been predetermined (p. 283).

The researcher should be careful in setting a time period for the interviews. Anderson and Jack (1990) reveal mistakes made while doing oral histories for a Women's Heritage Project. Presetting the number of interviews and the time limits resulted in an incomplete account which was limited by trying to attain particular information instead of allowing the interview to flow. Anderson reports in retrospect, "I am painfully aware of lost opportunities for women to reflect on the activities and events they described and to explain in their terms more fully in their own words" (p. 13).

It is important in doing oral history to consider the verification of the data. Barzun and Graff (1985) write that the verification of data relies on "attention to detail, common sense reasoning, a developed feel for history and chronology, a familiarity with human behavior, and ever-enlarging stores of information" (p. 112) which will be found in both primary and secondary sources. Oblinger (1990) discusses a variety of techniques to assess accuracy: (a) continuing research into non-oral sources; (b) repeated interviewing; and (c) probing or cross-examination of initial interviews. He points out that these practices enable oral historians to "construct checks on reliability and validity. . . in a way that is impossible for researcher of traditional sources" (p. 3). The review of official documentation, descriptive data, and the retrospective reports allows a triangulation of the data. This process also helps to alleviate the potential problem of the "filtering" and "scripting" of old memories (Campbell, 1990, p. 252). Triangulation of the data will occur throughout the research and analysis process. A major purpose in the triangulation process is to enhance the study's generalizability by using multiple sources of data. By bringing more than one source of data to "bear on a single point. . . the sources will be used to corroborate, elaborate, and illuminate" the research (Marshall & Rossman, 1989). As new information becomes available, it will be analyzed against previous written and oral data.

A key aspect in the development of this study is the management of the data. The following information outlines how the data may be organized. Prior to gathering data, a preliminary list of categories should be compiled in order to better organize the data. This list may be expanded to include additional categories as needed. The data



gathered can be transferred to cards in the appropriate categories. Each interview should be tape recorded and transcribed. The process of transcribing not only supplies a written copy of the interview for analysis, but also enables the researcher to listen for verbal clues in the interview process which may indicate the need for further research or provide greater detail than note-taking would reveal. Individual transcriptions should be placed in separate folders which will include the following: (1) a table of contents with page numbers of the transcription; (2) notation of the metered numbers corresponding to the subject matter of the tape; (3) a profile description of the interviewee; (4) a description of the interview setting, including time and place; (5) interviewer's notes and observations; and (6) appropriate documentation from the interviewee to use the interviews (Davis, Bach, & MacLean, 1977).

Researchers should have written evidence of the narrator's understanding of the purpose and procedures of the research. Baum (1971) points out that the "value and continuation of oral history interviewing depend upon the voluntary ethical conduct of oral history practitioners" (p. 45). The researcher has the following responsibilities to the narrator: (1) to make clear how the material will be handled and used; (2) to record the interview accurately and work with the narrator toward this end; (3) and to adhere to any agreements made.

The final phase of this research will be to give interpretation and coherence to the data through the written report. Barzun and Graff (1985) write "the facts never speak for themselves. They must be marshaled, linked together and given voice" (p. viii). This is where the data takes on a human quality as the stories revealed through oral history are woven with the primary written data. The judgment and interpretation of the researcher are key to the end result and the final report represents the "insight and coherence of a set of facts that requires the skills and imagination of the researcher (Merriam & Simpson, 1984, p. 76). The value of the research ultimately rests on the ability of the researcher to explore, validate, imagine and communicate.

### Untapped Sources

There are many opportunities for adult educators to conduct oral history. Some projects may begin with well-defined parameters while others emerge through conversations. In an effort to obtain "significant" data, researchers may overlook sources closest to them. They may find a wealth of data as close as their own families and communities. The following may help researchers get started:

1. Get to know extended family members. These individuals are often a great source of information. They will not only share their own experiences but provide the researcher with leads to other people and provide a personal account of the times being studied.
2. Contact local/community historical groups. These organizations can provide a starting point for the research in regard to written documentation and names of people in the local community that may be interviewed. Because oral history is increasing in the local community, there may already be some narratives which may be explored.
3. Review local newspapers and community magazines with an eye for oral history. These publications (especially in small towns) periodically highlight the lives of local people. Within the articles may be a brief mention of involvement in activities that can lead to interesting research.

4. Visit colleges/universities in the area. Most institutions will have an archive which may reveal accounts of adult education programs and the participants. Photographs, class lists, and other memorabilia can provide valuable leads.

5. Visit local churches and community groups. Congregations and close-knit organizations are usually familiar with their membership and can provide leads to potential interviews.

6. Ask individuals about their experiences during the war years and the Depression. These times brought a wide variety of adult education programs and people are generally unaware of the value of their experiences to research.

This list provides only a few examples to get the researcher started thinking about oral histories. The key is to think in terms of "people" as the source of valuable research data.

### **Conclusion**

Historical research is the most effective method for understanding practice according to adult education historian Robert Carlson (Merriam & Simpson, 1984). It gives the perspective that "lets us determine where we have come from, where we appear to be going, and how we might influence events in a humane direction" (p. 70). Oral history can provide a more complete history and a more human one. For the field of adult education, oral history can lead to new discoveries, provide an opportunity for critical analysis, and reveal the voices of adults who have been silent of silenced to long.

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## Designing an Empirical Audit of the Learning Organization

Karen E. Watkins & Victoria J. Marsick

### Abstract

In this paper, we describe our approach to studying the learning organization. We begin with our framework for understanding the learning organization, describe seven defining characteristics, and pose measures for each characteristic.

### Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to present an approach to studying the learning organization. We have surveyed the exhaustive literature on the learning organization, including numerous reviews of the literature. Yet, almost universally, this literature has been more conceptual than empirical. We have also examined numerous organizational experiments, and now propose a template for conducting research on the learning organization based on our framework.

### A Framework for the Learning Organization

Our framework for understanding the learning organization addresses learning at four levels: individual, team, organization, and society. *Individual learning* is the level of measurement with which educators are most familiar. We are not, however, looking solely at classroom education. Individuals are expected to learn continuously as they work in order to continuously improve their own knowledge and behavior, and to use their learning to improve the way in which work gets done. Individual learners are expected to be more self-directed, at least in their motivation; and they must develop their capacity to learn continuously. We are particularly interested in the way in which learning grows out of the work itself. *Team learning* does not simply refer to people learning as they work in teams; the entire team becomes a learning body. There is a change in the group's capacity for collaborative, synergistic work. Team learning involves the mutual construction of knowledge through dialogue. *Organizational learning* is best seen through change in the organization's capacity for innovation and new knowledge. Learning by individuals and teams are the vehicles through which organizations learn; but there is no guarantee that organizations learn just because individuals or teams learn. Employees must be empowered and structures decentralized for this level of learning to take place. Systems must be in place to embed learning



results. *Societal learning* is change in the overall capacity of the community and society. Changes in society impact changes in organizations; but the reverse is also true. Organizations affect the quality of life for employees, and in turn, this affects the employee's interactions with family, friends, and others in the community. Organizations are laboratories in which societal forces are played out. By their policies, organizations can also affect the shape of society through the limits they place or the assistance they provide to individual employees.

We have identified indicators to measure learning at these four levels. We describe these indicators using seven C's. Each of the C's is more applicable to one or two of the four levels of learning:

- individual learning: continuous
- team learning: collaborative, collective, creative, and connected
- organizational learning: connected, captured and codified, capacity building
- societal learning: connected to a larger community, capacity building

#### Individual Learning: Continuous

Learning is most relevant when it evolves directly out of work experiences. This learning can take place in a classroom and be formally structured, but delivered when it is truly needed for the job. Just-in-time training often brings training to the work site through learning centers and takes place via technologically-mediated instruction. Continuous learning is even more frequently informal. It takes place on the job, often in groups, and through learning from experience. Representative items include:

- Is formal training tied to real work problems and issues?
- Do employees have access to development assessment tools?
- Does the reward system incent people for learning new skills?
- Are people punished when they make mistakes, or are they encouraged to learn from them?
- Are there opportunities to learn outside the classroom from mentors, coaches, job rotation, and challenging job assignments?

#### Team Learning: Collaborative, Collective, Connected, Creative

*Collaborative* learning occurs through cooperative participation with others in meaningful tasks. Johnsonville Foods (Honold, 1991) for example, decided to use "the business to build great people" (p. 56) with the expectation that committed people, working with one another to solve

problems in a collaborative way, would pay off. And it did. Representative items include:

- Are employees encouraged to enjoy the work that they do?
- Is diversity welcomed, not just tolerated?
- Do people learn from one another as mentors, coaches, and team members?
- Are blame and fear minimized in conflict situations?
- Are alternative work-time options available to accommodate employee needs, such as flex time, compressed work weeks, flex pace/telecommuting, and job sharing?

*Collective* learning refers to the aggregated, shared learning of individuals or teams. But it is not just additive. Collective learning is the way in which people and groups collectively determining the meanings of organizational acts and intentions. Representative items include:

- Do people talk frequently about their work, share new ways of doing things, exchange information, and debate ideas?
- Do managers at many levels talk about the meaning of continuous learning, continuous improvement, quality, diversity, or other initiatives to ensure that everyone understands what the organization means by these terms?
- Are employees encouraged to challenge these meanings if they feel they have other perspectives worth considering?
- Are they supported when they question the status quo?

*Connected* learning at the team level involves a very real sense that people are working toward a longer term goal than immediate profits, that their work and their products in some way better the lives of those around them. They are intrinsically connected to a larger environment of internal or external suppliers and customers. Representative items include:

- Do employees truly partner with their internal and external customers?
- Do managers and employees address and improve job satisfaction among all employees, including managers?

*Creativity* can take place at many levels. For some kinds of product development, creativity best occurs by the lone scientist or researcher. But creativity means thinking in new ways. For many complex problems in organizations, solutions only come through work in groups and teams, often across functional boundaries. Creativity requires thinking outside of one's usual mental frameworks. Creativity has been measured by three criteria: fluency (the amount of detail and refinement of the idea), uniqueness (the originality of the conception), and frequency (the sheer quantity of creative ideas). Representative items that capture this dimension include:

- Do employees strive to learn what customers will need in the future so they can delight them?
- Do employees have a healthy sense of "play" about their work?
- Is innovation encouraged, even when it does not always result in immediate profits?
- Are employees rewarded for experimentation and appropriate risk taking?
- Are employees encouraged to work with new technology or to create new products, services, or processes?

Organizational Learning: Connected, Captured and Codified, Capacity Building

We have already used "*connected*" to characterize team learning. This dimension continues when describing larger social groupings at the organizational level. Downsizing and reorganization has disrupted a sense of connection with a community. Bureaucracies are structured to produce alienation, with roles and hierarchical levels intended to produce distance. In a learning organization, there is a sense of connection. Structure must encourage a high level of interdependence if each part of the organization is to learn from the others. Representative items include:

- Is employee ownership encouraged through gainsharing, stock options, and other incentive programs?
- Is the overall welfare of employees an organizational commitment, publicly discussed and provided for through family-friendly benefit policies, employee assistance programs, and long term mutual commitments?
- Do organizations monitor accident rates, safety or EPA violations?

Few changes would endure unless *captured and codified* in policies and procedures. Learning organizations need systems that do this that are motivating and accessible, such as employee suggestion systems, quality circles, and employee problem-solving groups. In a learning organization, policy ensures that learning itself takes place. IBM has long required managers to obtain 40 hours of training per year. By contrast, in one corporation, the union limits contract employees to 10 hours of training per year. Policies which promote a learning organization do not specify what individuals must learn, but do reflect a spirit of professional responsibility. Finally, participation in the development of policy is also part of the learning culture. Public dialogue is encouraged and heeded. Policy making is not a unilateral act of top management because information now resides more at the periphery of the organization. Representative items include:

- Is development planning part of an annual goal setting process vs. being part of performance appraisal?
- Is there self-development money budgeted for every employee that can be spent without a lengthy approval process?
- Does the organization have a process in place for identifying key competencies on a regular basis and communicating those to employees for their development and career planning?
- Do employees use computer bulletin boards and other communication systems to capture learnings?
- Are there procedures in place to debrief employees regularly when they gather information about their internal and external customers?
- After completing key projects, are employees asked to stop and reflect on their experiences so that they can alter plans for next steps?

Organizational learning is much more than technical assistance for implementing large scale change efforts. By contrast, the intent of organizational learning is *organizational capacity building* to make changes. Successful learning organizations create systems which build the overall capacity of the organization to grow and learn continuously. Representative items include:

- Is the organization investing significantly in big and little R&D?
- Is the organization ensuring that the basal level of skill in the organization is adequate through programs like workplace literacy?
- Does the organization build repeatable solutions by encouraging people to document and measure the extent to which solutions worked in subsequent situations?

#### Societal Learning: Connected to a Larger Community. Capacity Building

The two dimensions selected at this level overlap with the organizational level, but we can look at them from a more aggregated, societal level. Learning organizations see themselves as *connected* to a larger community. They recognize the interdependence among individuals, organizations, and the society in which they function. Learning organizations might develop an environmental index as a measure of sensitivity and awareness of impact on the environment. This index includes the degree to which the organization conforms to legal standards for air and water pollution, and for safety. Learning organizations might also develop a social consciousness index that reflects the involvement of the organization in community betterment. Spending for corporate social responsibility is focused on overall enhancement of the corporation's social environment. Representative items that capture this dimension include the following:

- Are corporate social responsibility efforts aimed at overall long term improvement of the corporation's social environment?



- Do the organization's affirmative practices seek fairness and affirmatively redress imbalances?
- Do policies guarantee the right to dialogue about controversial issues?
- Do policies protect the rights of the organization and the individual, especially those who are less powerful?

Societal *capacity building* may seem a stretch for most organizations, given the demands already placed on them for survival. The CEO of Starbucks, however, builds societal capacity along with organizational capacity when he ensures that all employees, full or part time, have access to health benefits. Societal capacity is built, for example, when organizations provide for adequate sick leave, maternity/paternity leave, personal leave for eldercare, flextime, work at home options, job sharing, child care vouchers, and company-sponsored telephone assistance and monitoring of latchkey children or elderly relatives. Representative items include:

- Does the organization invest in the learning of all shareholders, even external stakeholders?
- Do policies assure that individuals will be better supported in their efforts to resolve conflicts between work and family demands?

### Conclusion

Although much has been said in speculative terms about how to design learning organizations, little has been done to measure what is unique about a learning organization. We conclude that organizations learn all of the time, but seldom create effective systems for capturing, sustaining, and disseminating learning. As adult educators, we bring to the dialogue about the learning organization a unique perspective about the informal and developmental nature of learning. Knowledge of how organizations learn helps adult educators create organizations which not only provide learning, but which learn as well.

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PERCEPTIONS OF SUCCESS AND THE POWER AND CONTROL  
OVER CHANGE IN WOMEN'S LIVES WITH  
IMPLICATIONS FOR ADULT EDUCATION

Dorothy Wiese

Abstract

The purpose of this research was to examine perceptions of success and the power and control over change in women's lives based on interviews with professional women living in St. Petersburg, Russia.

Background

As a business professor at Elgin Community College, I am concerned about helping returning adult women balance their busy and changing lives. I first used phenomenology in a study of myself as a woman growing. From this I decided to interview women who had been identified as successful in order to identify themes which could be useful in counseling returning adult women.

A pilot study was conducted with three American professional women. These interviews were tape recorded and transcribed by me, transcripts were coded, codes were collapsed, and process memos were written. Discussion related to these interviews was held with women from America, Austria, Finland, and Estonia. Questions were developed and interviews were held with 11 professional women living in St. Petersburg, Russia, during May and June, 1991. These interviews were particularly enlightening due to the significant change that was occurring in their lives. The interview format was redesigned, and thorough interviews were conducted during 1992.

Methodology

Twenty-six professional women living in St. Petersburg, Russia, were interviewed during May and June, 1992. Women represented a variety of fields including medical doctors and professionals, lawyers, musicians, scientists, industry officials, and professors who taught several different subjects,

The interviews were conducted with the assistance of two Russian interpreters who were English teachers at St. Petersburg Technical University and were recommended by their director. Discussion was held with each interpreter to be sure that she understood each question thoroughly. Women who were interviewed were identified by various professionals as women who appear to be successful in balancing forces in their lives.

Women who spoke English were personally interviewed by me. I was present at the interviews of women who spoke little or no English while one of the interpreters conducted the interview and followed each question with immediate translation. During the interviews conducted by a translator, I observed, wrote notes, and questioned or commented when it was appropriate to do so. Interviews lasted between one and two hours; each interview was tape recorded. The interpreters translated each interview in English, and samples of their translations were examined by a Russian professor for accuracy. I translated each of the interviews which I conducted in English.

During the time that I was in Russia, I kept a diary. Since returning, I have reflected on the interviews and discussed them

with others. I have listened to tapes and studied the transcripts. Transcripts have been coded; codes collapsed; and themes identified, sorted, and categorized. according to the procedure utilized by Barney G. Glaser and Anselm L. Strauss.

A phenomenological analysis of the interviews was used. Alfred Schutz discusses the importance of intersubjective understanding in phenomenology, "such a task of discovering the constitution of the other self can only be carried out in a transcendently phenomenological manner." (p. 115) Sherman M. Stanage describes the intersubjectivity of the researcher and research subjects:

1. **Intuiting the Phenomenon**--the researcher shares feelings with research subjects. Stanage says, "in intuiting the phenomenon we focus upon its uniqueness, upon itself as reducible to nothing but itself." (p. 82) According to Stanage, intersubjectivity occurs when our person and another's person find areas of mutual agreement; we share 'seeing.' Intuiting the Phenomenon began for me when I met each of the women who were interviewed either before the interview was scheduled or at the time of the interview. I believe that I was able to establish rapport with each interviewee whether I interviewed her in English or one of two translators interviewed her while I observed and commented. At times I was able to continue my relationship with an interviewee following the formal interview. Shared feelings ranged from happiness to sadness. Problem solving discussions were held during informal and formal meetings.

This sharing of feelings with the research subject led me to the second phase which Stanage describes when using phenomenological research.

2. **Experiencing**--through the interviewing process and reviewing of transcripts, the researcher identifies themes which aid the researcher in experiencing common themes that emerge from transcripts of the interviews. Once again intersubjectivity is important to understanding as experiencing is shared. Living in St. Petersburg with a private family helped me in the process of experiencing. Visiting interviewees at their place of work or their home enriched this experience. Reading the transcripts and listening to tapes helped me picture each woman and relive the experience we shared. This leads to the third phase described by Stanage.

3. **Consciousing**--the researcher acquires "a knowing-with" (p. 83). Stanage believes that consciousing transcends feeling and experiencing. Through reflection, the researcher identifies insights which can be useful in adult education. These insights come from intersubjectivity of themes which emerge from intuiting, experiencing and consciousing. As I teach returning adult students at Elgin Community College, I often draw on themes and stories which emerged from this research.

One value of the interview is the stories that emerge. The importance of narrative is discussed by Donald E. Polkinghorne, "The purpose of descriptive narrative research is to produce an accurate description of the interpretive narrative accounts individuals or groups use to make sequences of events in their lives or organizations meaningful." (p. 161-162) Many of the women who were interviewed by me thanked me at the end of the interview. They found the process interesting, and they liked looking at their lives through my questions. Many said that they would like to see the results of this research. While I was in

Russia, I was invited to consult with groups of professors and students as well as representatives of various women's organizations who were debating issues which should be included in their country's new constitution.

My intuiting, experiencing, and consciousness have resulted in findings which I believe can be useful in adult education.

### Findings

I have chosen to develop themes which evolved from questions related to success, power, and change in the lives of the women who were interviewed for this study.

**Success** is defined as, "a favorable or satisfactory outcome or result" or "the gaining of wealth, fame, rank, etc." in Webster's New World Dictionary, Second College Edition. Three definitions of success given by some interviewees follow: "I would say it's harmony. Harmony inside myself and harmony with people." "There may be just a success from the outside, and it's important that it should coincide with your inner feeling of success." "For me successful can be only my achievements in perceiving my inner world and world in general."

Most of the women who were interviewed were not scared of success, and many questioned why it should scare them. One of those who was confident said that she was afraid of success, although there was some discussion about the clarity of the question. Another said she was a little bit afraid of success. Of those who viewed themselves as neither successful nor powerful, none were afraid of success. One of the five who vacillated said that she was afraid of success, another wasn't afraid but felt that she would never achieve success, one said that she didn't like to be successful.

When asked, "How do you achieve success?", the theme of hard work emerged from the positive answers of 20 women. Comments follow: "I work hard, read much, study." "I work very hard in career and self-development." "I'm very hard working, industrious, and that helps me succeed." "Only by toil." "My students, now my colleagues, work hard--they share my views." "I just work hard." "By very hard work." "I am very persistent in my work." "I work hard at myself." "I will always proceed by self-development." "With great toil."

The same question took on negative responses from six women. **Negative** themes included: "I'm not a fighter." "I've failed in everything." "I had one very serious stress . . . it was a complete failure . . . I met the wrong person as my supervisor . . . I can't get rid of those bad feelings." "You should accept the things as they are . . . but I can't." "I'm not satisfied." "I'm not practical in life."

The question, "What future plans do you have for achieving success?" resulted in a variety of answers. The most frequent theme **Creation** came from the responses of ten women. Positive responses include: "I'd like to go on with my business of women education . . . the most important thing to me now. The more women will get involved . . . the more success I will achieve." "Well, now we are working out a training program, and my plans are to create such sort of programs which could be really useful to people." "Now we should change for the practical application; we should adapt our academic knowledge to practice, find some forms of small business." "I try to find my own way of life." "I'd



like to have my own school. I want to have followers. I want to work exclusively in the field of education." "I feel that in my country now it is the time when you have to do something; you cannot just wait." "First of all I want to succeed in my work."

Nine people identified the theme Difficulty when they responded negatively to the question of future plans for success. A few answers follow: "In our circumstances, I find it difficult, if not impossible altogether, to achieve more than I have achieved. If I go on with my career, it will deteriorate my health, damage it, because our everyday life is abundant with hardships, which keep arising again and again, both material and moral ones." "To make plans for future of this country is nonsense . . . . For example, lately it was prestigious to publish books, now I have to sell my own books to the students to cover the spending, expenses." "I think I shall hardly ever achieve any more success at work because our life is very hard now. . . . As for my private life, it's more complicated . . . it depends on our household and our finances which are extremely scarce now. We have to earn money now; there is no other way out." "Unfortunately, I love my science work, but now we have to speak about how to survive, not how to make fun."

Power was discussed in three questions: "How do you define the power you have in your life?" "How do you handle your own power?" "How do you expect to handle your power in the future?" Marilyn French uses two definitions of power in the United States: "There is power-to, which refers to ability, capacity, and connotes a kind of freedom, and there is power-over, which refers to domination. Both forms are highly esteemed in our society." (p. 505) Women in this study had both positive and negative responses to questions about power.

While a variety of responses evolved from the questions about power, the one theme that I would like to discuss is Spiritual. Responses include: "If I am sure that the goal I'm going to is honorable, then I can be powerful. I believe into the soul of every person. I believe into cosmic reason." "And if I try to find some positive moments in power, I think I'll define it as the power of some idea I have. It is not connected with force, it is connected with the desire to inspire people." "This is the strength given to me by my friends, by my family, by my environment, perhaps by God. I'm not a strong believer because I think the majority of our people who became believers during the last two years are not sincere." "I try to avoid it. Because at present, I am not interested in power; I am more interested in my inner world. I am not interested in getting any power over other people."

Others viewed power as negative. Themes of Control were stated: "I don't want to have power because power means control over people to me. I hate the very idea of control in somebody's life. I think I will never have power because of my character. . . . I don't want it." "I define power as the possibility to influence other people, their behavior. But the very role of power is unpleasant to me. Subconsciously I reject it." "I've never wanted to be in power. I always tried to avoid any positions which may give me an opportunity to suppress other people." "Though I've got power over my students I think I can't use it. I try to be on friendly terms with them." "I try not to use my power. I try not to expose my power to other people." "As I always was responsible for distributing material welfare or arranging activity so in order to gain my ends, I had to perform power; though, I didn't have an inner impulse to be powerful."

Change was the focus of four questions. The majority of women stated that they had changed in their lives. The theme of Experience was given as a positive reason for the question "Why do you believe this change occurred?" "I've changed my life, and it became full of significance." "Life made me, taught me." "I've been successful in my career" "This is the age when you are strong enough to do things, and you have acquired a lot of experience. This is the best time of life."

The question, "What power do you believe you have over change in your life?" and a similar question about the future were answered with the theme of Power: "I have power. I think everything depends on me, on my will, and I think I can change a lot in my life." "It was clear that the only person responsible for my future was myself. I had a certain freedom of choice. Being able to choose, I did it; and my choice resulted in the changes significant for the whole of my future life." "Power of a man is inexhaustible due to self-experience. So though being not very young, I am sure to have power enough--I take fitness classes trying to keep my physical state--in future I shall recompense my physical deficiency with moral achievements." "I think I'll be able to change everything I'll want in the future. If I don't change anything now, that's just because I think I don't have to." "I think I'll need much power to survive; but to my mind, I'll be able to change my life if I want it." "I think I have great power taking into account what is now going on in the country."

The theme of Helplessness also appeared in questions about power over change: "It's difficult to answer because many things don't depend on us. You think it'll go like that, but you find out it doesn't depend on your desire, your will." "I think we are helpless now." "But sometimes I am helpless to change anything because I live with other people who have their own principles and standards." "My previous state didn't satisfy me. I suffered greatly from it, and at last, I lost the opportunity to control myself." In spite of the negative tone of these statements, however, these women were able to function and to achieve happiness in their lives; this became apparent when their total transcript and my observations were analyzed.

### Conclusions

Themes which arose from positive responses and the insights gained from themes which arose from negative responses demonstrate the ability of women in this study to balance their lives and use their power to continue to grow. I believe that people can learn a great deal from these women's efforts to continue to grow intellectually, personally, and professionally in spite of dramatic change in their lives. Findings will be helpful in counseling returning adult women who often seek education because of a crisis in their lives.

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Adult Learning, Situated Cognition, and Authentic Activity:  
Relocating Adult Education in the Context of Experience  
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**Abstract:** The purpose of this paper is to situate adult learning as a complex social phenomenon in which people, setting, and culturally-provided tools contribute essential elements to adult cognition.

Much of American adult learning research and theory has reflected an individual orientation to adult learning. Increasingly, though, a concern is emerging that adult education has reduced a complex social phenomenon of education to a psychological phenomenon of individual learning (Rubenson, 1989). While tending to reinforce the traditional American emphasis on individual growth and development approaches to adult education, such a tradition tends to neglect and undervalue significant social and contextual elements of adult learning.

Thus the essential issue facing learning theory is the question of context. Do learning and knowing exist largely as a function of individual, internal cognitive processes, as the dominant psychological models propose? Is learning just a process of individually internalizing highly decontextualized principles of knowledge, problem solving strategies, and critical thinking procedures that are infinitely transferable to any and all circumstances requiring their use? Indeed, is knowledge, and the cognitive practices by which it is acquired, portable and therefore deliverable upon demand in any setting? Can we, in fact, theorize our learning and knowing to such an extent that it functions independently of context?

In contrast to a view of learning as the accumulation of verbally-transmitted, internally processed general knowledge that makes cognitive skills transferable across situations, proponents of a view of knowing and learning as inherently and integrally situated in the everyday real world of social actors argue that "knowledge-in-practice, constituted in the settings of practice, is the locus of the most powerful knowledgeability of people in the lived-in world" (Lave, 1988, p. 14). Thus, to understand how adults learn and know means we have to understand the experiential, social, and tool-dependent nature of the way that knowing and learning are constructed in the everyday activities of real people acting in the real world. As Lave argues, cognitive practices are actually a complex social phenomenon interwoven into the context of the problem to be solved, not merely a set of individually located, internally functioning neurological processes: "cognition observed in everyday practice is distributed--stretched over, not divided among--mind, body, activity and culturally organized settings (which include other actors)" (1988, p. 1). Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to situate adult learning as a complex social phenomenon in which people, setting, and culturally-provided tools contribute essential elements to adult cognition.

To introduce a view of adult knowing and learning as situated in a sociocultural context, I discuss a critique of educational claims of learning transfer. Next I argue that a situated view of knowing and learning seriously undermines the dominate psychological view of decontextualized and generic problem solving ("scientific rationality"). I then suggest a framework for locating learning and knowledge as "authentic activity" in the social relations of people acting in the everyday world. In the paper I argue that if we are to improve the practice of adult education, we must understand adult learning as a complex social phenomenon located in tool-dependent, authentic social activity rather than just as an individualistic, neurological process of inculcating allegedly transferable cognitive practices. The significance of this approach brings substance to time-honored adult education pragmatic beliefs in experientially-based learning by providing a practical orientation by which adult



educators can plan and construct learning activities in socially organized and tool-dependent contexts.

On the Issue of Transfer and the Nature of Situated Learning and Knowing. The dominant psychological models assume learning and knowing to be a complex neurological process of individualistic mentation. In this view learning occurs inside the physiological mind in a process that acquires knowledge to be used at will in any circumstance. As Lave has argued in her research of how adults do arithmetic (arguably the most transferable and decontextualized of all knowledge) in actual settings, "conventional academic and folk theory assumes that arithmetic is learned in school...and is then literally carried away from school to be applied at will in any situation that calls for calculation" (1988, p. 4). This central conception of knowledge as transferable has dominated many of our theories of education (Brown, Collins, and Duguid, 1989). Such a position is a function of our assumptions about the value of scientific reasoning, which argues that knowledge is discovered through an empirical-analytic process and that such knowledge once discovered can be abstracted and acquired by learners for use at their discretion in any context.

This central assumption about the nature of knowledge and learning is what proponents of the situated cognition viewpoint find most problematic. Actually, their empirical and theoretical arguments persuasively suggest that such an assumption about the transferability of knowledge is perhaps fundamentally untrue. In a review of research on learning transfer, Lave concluded that there was "no empirical evidence" (1988, p. 43) for verifying the assumption of transferability. Lave argues that the research on learning transfer has not focused on the right issues precisely because it has attempted to separate learning from the social world in which it occurs, thereby ignoring the constitutive elements that give it meaning. This is the central concern: "to assume that under ideal circumstances people's underlying capacities or processes can be attributed to their internal functioning without concern for the context of their activity is unrealistic" (Rogoff & Lave, 1984, p. 2). Knowledge and learning has to be understood as inextricably integrated with the setting in which it exists. Situations can be said to "co-produce knowledge through activity. Learning and cognition, it is now possible to argue, are fundamentally situated" (Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989, p. 32).

What does it mean to be "fundamentally situated"? This framework succinctly rejects the argument that "verbally transmitted, explicit, general knowledge is the main prerequisite that makes cognitive skills available for transfer across situations" (Lave, 1988, p. 14). To be fundamentally situated means that "context is an integral aspect of cognitive events, not a nuisance variable" (Rogoff & Lave, 1984, p. 3). This view proposes instead that "central to the everyday contexts in which cognitive activity occurs is interaction with other people and the use of socially provided tools and schemas for solving problems. Cognitive activity is socially defined, interpreted, and supported" (Rogoff & Lave, 1984, p. 4). Thus there are two components to the view that knowing and learning are fundamentally situated. First is the claim that knowing and learning are centrally integrated within the language, tools, and culture of socially organized settings. Second is the claim that setting and activity dialectically structure cognition.

Resnick (1987) provides a revealing rendition of the social nature of cognition. She reports on the human interactions required to pilot a ship into a harbor which "requires six people with three different job descriptions" (p. 13), all socially interacting and each using situationally-provided tools to shape their cognitive processes. Thus piloting a ship is not merely an exercise in applying navigational algorithms of geometry but is in fact a complex social phenomenon of people acting in a culturally organized setting; no one individual can cognitively produce the course headings without explicit reference to and dependence upon other individuals,

navigational tools, and the setting. Cognition is thus distributed among the people acting in a culturally organized setting (see other examples in Rogoff & Lave, 1984). Such evidence points to the central notion: cognition is structured at the social level of human interaction, not at the internal level of individual psychology (Wertsch, 1985). In other words, cognitive practices and the tools by which they are carried out are not a function of acquiring individual mentation algorithms but are necessarily a function of people acting in social situations. Perhaps most revealing in this respect is Vygotsky's notion that learning and knowledge originate in "interindividual activity" before it exists in the individual (Wertsch, 1985), which is the logic for claiming a primary social dimension, rather than an individual one, to cognitive practices. While these examples highlight the social nature of cognition, they also introduce the fundamental and dialectical structuring of cognition by the circumstances.

Lave (1988) argues that cognition is dialectically structured by activity and setting. In other words, to understand learning and knowing, the intricacies of human activities in specific setting must be known because they fundamentally structure how that learning and knowing occur. Without the setting and activity, we cannot understand the cognition. Lave has reported extensively on her research of how adults use arithmetic in grocery shopping to argue this point of view. In that research she has demonstrated not only that adults do not use the computational algorithms taught them in school but also that the calculations adults perform to make grocery item choices are fundamentally structured by the setting of the grocery store itself and the activity of shopping (other examples are available in Lave & Wenger, 1991; Rogoff & Lave, 1984). Examining cognitive practices in their everyday social settings strongly suggests that our conceptualizations regarding the nature of knowledge and our ways of learning and knowing it need serious reconstruction. Consequently, the actual nature of problem solving is at issue which has profound implications for how we teach.

On the Nature of Rationality and Problem Solving. The research supporting this point of view reports numerous examples of how integrally related the problem, the setting, and the activity are to understanding how learning and knowing take place. Underlying these attempts to depict situated cognition is a renunciation of the scientific model of comprehensive rational thinking. Proponents of this situated framework argue that cognition in the everyday world has to be understood in a fundamentally different way than that proposed by the scientific understanding of rationalism. The central issue concerns the construction of problems and how the setting and culturally organized social practices enable cognition.

Scientific rationalism has been under attack for some time now for failing to provide an accurate account of human cognition (Bernstein, 1983; Schon, 1983). Reviewing some of the assumptions of this scientific framework will reveal how a situated view of cognition allows us to understand the central characteristics of how people think and know in fundamentally different ways. Scientific rationalism, while masquerading as an account of how people actually think, more accurately reflects a set of standards and value judgments about how people *should* think. Scientific rationalism thus proposes a means-end logic which features goals, objectives, alternatives, consequences, and choice, all familiar components of this view. What makes this "rational" is the consistency of the consequence-analysis logic and the inclusiveness of ascertaining possible consequences. Mehan describes this type of cognition as requiring "the consideration of all possible alternatives, an assessment of the probability of each one, and an evaluation of each set of consequences for all relevant goals" (1984, p. 46). Forester (1989, p. 49) describes this as the ideal "rational-comprehensive" position which assumes a well defined problem, a full array of alternatives, total information about all

consequences, full awareness of the intentions of all interested parties, and unlimited time to conduct analysis of consequences. First proposed by Descartes's Discourse on Method, this model of cognition permeates the Western world's version of rationality both in the natural and social sciences, and based on it, we can easily see why issues of generalizability and transfer are central to understanding this as an ideal for cognition. Thus the true essence of scientific rationalism is not to reflect a body of knowledge per se but in fact is an argument for a highly portable procedure of inquiry—that is, given the scientific model of steps, any problem can be solved. At the same time, as Forester wryly notes, "virtually everyone agrees, this model is impossible to follow in any strict sense, because radically simplifying steps are immediately necessary in any practical application" (1989, p. 50).

Thus, various notions of "bounding" have been proposed over the years (Forester, 1989; Schon, 1983) to account for the inability of the ideal rational cognitive model to explain actual human cognition, or more perversely put, for humans' failure to measure up to the ideal model. Bounded notions of rationality seek to relax the assumptions of ideal rationality: problems are ill-defined and messy, all possible consequences are neither known nor examined, incomplete information exists concerning the alternatives that are considered, interested parties are often ignored, and time to consider and act are finite because of the circumstances (Forester, 1989). Furthermore, rather than seeking to "optimize" solutions (Rogoff & Lave, 1984), humans expedite them; that is, they seek a "satisficing" (Forester, 1989) solution: "what is regarded as logical problem-solving [cognition] in academic settings may not fit with problem-solving in everyday situations, not because people are 'illogical' but because practical problem-solving requires efficiency rather than a full and systematic consideration of all alternatives" (Rogoff & Lave, 1984, p. 7).

But understanding human cognition is more than a matter of relaxing the parameters of ideal rationality. The "messy" view of rationality proposed above introduces the important elements of social interaction in context. To understand human cognition, we have to see and examine it as it is practiced in culturally organized settings. While the dominant model has seen context as a nuisance to be discarded or ignored in seeking an understanding of pure mentation, it is actually the element that makes sense of cognition. In other words, the very conditions which allegedly augment the ideal-comprehensive view of cognition—generalized internal mental algorithms and analogs, highly transportable across time and circumstance—are, in fact, according to a situated view of cognition, tremendously mitigated by the highly local nature of everyday practical human cognition. As Lave argues, "a more appropriate unit of analysis is the whole person in action, acting with the settings of that activity. This shifts the boundaries of activity well outside the skull....It is within this framework that the idea of cognition as stretched across mind, body, and activity and setting begins to make sense" (1988, pp. 17-18).

Thus the real failure of psychologically framed understandings of cognition is that they are unable to specify, that is, make known, the actual nature of experience and activity. Indeed, the quest has been to ignore the very elements which bring meaning to learning and knowing. The failure, clearly located in the scientific epistemology that has dominated 20th century educational thinking, is this inability, or at least, reluctance, to characterize what experience means and how it impacts cognition. By attending to the parameters mandated by scientific rationalism with its standard of producing allegedly transferable notions, the very essence of cognition has been lost in a quest for understanding it in some allegedly pure form. What then is the solution? If cognition is indeed located in the social relations of people acting in culturally organized settings, how can we "resituate" learning so that it regains



its circumstantially-bound meaning? The answer, according to the situated view, lies in authentic activity.

**Authentic Activity: Situated Cognition and the Practice of Adult Education.** The point of this paper is to argue that "thinking is intricately interwoven with the context of the problem to be solved" (Rogoff & Lave, 1984, p. 2). This challenge to the dominant view of cognition requires the restructuring of adult education practice. If the philosophy, analysis, and evidence of situated cognition have credence, then the practice of adult education can no longer be located in the traditional paradigm of decontextualized process and principle. If learning and knowing are to be based on the actual cognitive practices of humans, then they have to be located in authentic activity.

What then is authentic activity? Given the argument of this analysis, authentic activity has to be situations in which actual cognitive processes are required rather than the decontextualized ones typically demanded in schooling. As Brown, Collins, and Duguid (1989) have demonstrated, learning is a process of enculturation: if we are to learn, we must become embedded in the culture in which the knowing and learning have meaning; conceptual frameworks cannot be meaningfully removed from their settings or too-dependency. Learning in this respect is a cultural phenomenon because people do not learn abstract, self-contained units of knowledge which they then apply to new situations. Authentic activity, then, is best understood as ordinary cognitive practices that are culturally defined, tool dependent, and socially interactive (Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989).

Authentic activity therefore requires that learning and knowing always be located in the actual situations of their creation and use. Thus learning and knowing are a process of enculturation, not simply a matter of acquisition. Problem solving and human cognitive practices are carried out in conjunction with the setting, not simply as internalized mental processes. Thus, proponents of this view offer various forms of apprenticeship as the crucial instructional mechanism for gaining the cultural proficiency necessary to operate in the world: "cognitive apprenticeship methods try to enculturate students into authentic practices through activity and social interaction in a way similar to that evident--and evidently successful--in craft apprenticeship" (Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989, p. 37). Resnick (1987) prefers the term bridging apprenticeships to simulate the actual conditions of cognition. Schon (1987) has described the reflective practicum as a way at getting at the tacit knowledge embedded in professional practice. Farmer (1991), focusing on the nature of ill-defined professional problems, argues for a situated approach to resolving practice dilemmas. "Anchored instruction" is another term used (Cognition and Technology Group at Vanderbilt, 1990). Central all of these notions is the importance of locating cognition in the social practice of real settings: "the term apprenticeship helps to emphasize the centrality of activity in learning and knowledge and highlights the inherently context-dependent, situated, and enculturating nature of learning" (Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989, p. 39).

Instructionally, this view argues forcibly for removing education out of schools and into real situations (indeed, much of the argument for this point of view charges traditional schooling of being demonstrably incapable of providing the learning necessary for human activity in the real world; see Resnick [1987]; Brown, Collins, & Duguid [1989]; and in particular Lave [1988]). Rather than presenting "knowledge" in traditional pedagogic fashion whereby students acquire it, the situated view proposes modeling, coaching, and practice approaches to learning (Cognition & Technology Group at Vanderbilt, 1990; Farmer, 1991; Schon, 1983). Numerous examples and models of this approach exist (e.g., medicine, law, architecture as well as building and artisan trades); indeed, it may well be the more dominant human learning mode, despite attempts to scientifically legitimate education. Once in a



setting, knowing and learning become intricately integrated with the tools, language, and culture of their use. And it is in this way that cognition becomes stretched across mind, body, and culturally organized settings.

Conclusion. I have made some attempt to describe an emerging view of human cognition that seeks to locate it in actual human activity. In the process we have seen how such a view offers a profound critique of the essential epistemological structures of our scientifically defined ways of knowing and learning. By rejecting the culture of transfer and its roots in scientific rationalism, situated cognition promises to provide a much sounder footing for our educational efforts by giving face and form to long standing adult education exhortation to locate learning in experience.

But there is ever so much more to this view which I would be remiss in not at least alluding to even though it is beyond the format of this paper. As intimated in several places, this view takes a profound exception to the common pedagogical practices of schooling. Ostensibly, this is because such practices, and adult education must be included in this respect, ineffectively prepare students for everyday tasks of human activity. Damaging enough as such a claim may be, the analysis and critique of this view go much deeper. Once learning and knowing can be located as a cultural phenomenon rather than a scientific one, then the issues of knowledge and power are revealed. The political agenda of this view is concerned with revealing the hegemonic schooling practices whereby dominant sociopolitical forces maintain their ascendancy. It is in this respect, as Lave (1988) argues, that schooling is fundamentally constituted to insure cultural reproduction across generations. Such an argument minimizes any expressed intent of schooling, adult education or otherwise, to be essentially concerned with individual growth and development.

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## HIGHLANDER FOLK SCHOOL AND THE INDUSTRIAL LABOR MOVEMENT: USING THE FBI FILES TO DEVELOP A THIRD PERSPECTIVE

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### ABSTRACT

This research analyzes the potential of using the main case FBI files as a primary source in reconstructing the history of Highlander Folk School between the early 1930s and the mid-1950s when the school was most active in the labor movement.

### INTRODUCTION

In 1988, while collecting data for my dissertation on Highlander Folk School's (HFS) relationship in the late 1940s and early 1950s to the United Packinghouse Workers of America (UPWA) and the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), I inquired into the availability of using Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) documents relevant to the topic. After several phone calls to the FBI in Washington, DC, I was informed by their historian that yes, I could see the documents, but only in the FBI reading room. Worse yet, copies could not be made. In 1990, while writing the last pages of my dissertation, the FBI files on HFS were published on microfilm for general distribution. Although my dissertation did not benefit from this archival collection, these FBI documents provide another dimension to my previous research which relied on the official archives of HFS and the UPWA, as well as oral histories.

HFS was never formally investigated by the FBI even though the agency maintained a sporadic interest and, therefore, monitored various activities of the school. Several times, though, the FBI came close to a formal investigation, and often received requests from local people, politicians, and other anti-Communist activists calling for formal investigations. The FBI appears to have been most interested in alleged Communist-related activities rather than HFS's involvement with the labor or civil rights movements. What little investigation the FBI did initiate invariably resulted in, for example, "no proof of Communist control or domination in the conduct of the school, although there are many indications of liberal if not radical interests in it" (FBI files, Office Memo, March 9, 1949, p. 594).

This analysis has been done in relationship to the HFS archives and the UPWA archives, as well as to other recently published books on the overall history of HFS and several biographies and interviews of key figures associated with the school, including co-founder Myles Horton and staff member James Dombrowski. When examining these files I looked for

historical completeness and attempted to develop a contextual perspective. Some of my conclusions include: (1) these files have limited potential for use as a sole or even primary archival source; (2) there are major gaps and omissions where documents either were not released, were filed in other locations than the FBI's central record system, or were not collected; (3) they provide a unique perspective which captures the paranoia and deception adhered to by the school's detractors; and (4) in conjunction with both recorded histories of HFS and the labor movement during this period, the FBI files provide the opportunity to triangulate historical events and reconstruct a more comprehensive history.

The significance of this research to the field of adult education extends beyond the historical importance of HFS. These FBI files are an important archival source to understanding adult education during the labor movement as well as the civil rights movement. Moreover, within the strong adult education traditions of progressivism and social reconstruction, this research offers some insight into the FBI's treatment of what it perceived as subversive activity. Finally, this paper probes the general potential of using FBI files to reconstruct the history of adult education.

#### WHAT IS CONTAINED IN THESE FILES

These FBI files contain a total of 1359 pages. Between April 1936 and June 1954, the period in which the school was most active in the labor movement, there are 732 pages. From the period between December 1955 to November 1967 there are 489 pages covering the period when HFS was active in the civil rights movement, and the tumultuous period when the school lost its state of Tennessee charter and reorganized as the Highlander Education and Research Center. The end of this file contains 108 pages of newspaper clippings collected between November 1940 and June 1967.

This collection includes: Many letters to and from the FBI regarding the school and its staff, among which are several from HFS staff directly to the FBI; an incomplete collection of newspaper clippings and magazine articles on the school, its activities and its staff; and a good collection of HFS produced material including annual reports, brochures, and pamphlets advertising various workshops, fund raising material, lists of workshop participants, and newsletters such as the Highlander Fling. The documents are reproduced in their original condition. As a result, a considerable amount of material is not readable or has significant sections that are not readable. The film containing newspaper articles, mimeographed copies, and carbon copies is often hard to read. There is also some redundancy where the same document has been collected and catalogued several times. This suggests that the FBI never developed a well-thought-out strategy to investigate HFS, resulting in a scattered, chaotic investigation where FBI field investigators had little or no knowledge of what had been collected earlier by other investigators.

## WHAT IS NOT CONTAINED IN THESE FILES

Any researcher attempting to use these files as the sole source of documentation should be aware of what is not contained in the files. There are few names of informants or people who might be sympathetic to the FBI. Also, names of places and circumstances from which names might be deduced have been blacked-out. In contrast, names of HFS supporters and staff are regularly mentioned when the FBI or an informant sought to establish the "anti-American" nature of the school. Moreover, when the politics of these people are referenced there are often gross inaccuracies. For example Dombrowski and Horton are described as Communists, rather than the socialists that they were.

There are approximately 355 pages from HFS's labor period that are not included in these files, but are referenced and catalogued elsewhere because of the privacy exemptions which protect the identify of living individuals. Such omissions leave the researcher with many unanswered questions. For example, why were some pages omitted when all the FBI had to do was black-out names and places? Also, in several instances when more than ten consecutive pages were filed elsewhere, questions arise regarding the seriousness or importance of an entire event that is omitted from the main file.

In addition, the FBI created and maintained a separate system of files that Theoharis (1990) has categorized as "non-record records."

Non-record records were neither indexed nor filed in the FBI's central records system. Because they were not so indexed and filed, theoretically they did not exist and were not retrievable in response, for example to a congressional subpoena or court-ordered discovery motion. Responding to any such request, FBI officials could truthfully affirm that no other records were uncovered through a search of the FBI's "central record system" (p. 186).

Although it appears unlikely that a set of non-record records was established by the FBI for HFS, there are some files that have been located that could prove useful for future research. Such non-record records include a file on First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt who was a steadfast supporter of HFS throughout this period. In addition, these non-record files would be the most likely source of information that may have implicated the FBI in illegal break-ins and investigations, such as the one HFS accused the FBI of conducting in 1950 (FBI files, pp. 594-711). Within the context of the main case files, the FBI could easily document its denial of such allegations while conducting illegal or unethical investigations.

Added to the hundreds of pages that are not included because of privacy exemptions, almost every memo, letter, or primary source that contains information the FBI deems sensitive, has parts that have been blacked-out. The results are numerous documents that are over 25% and often 50% blacked-out. This partial information leads the researcher to



invariably try to read between the lines. Here is an example from one FBI memo: "Synopsis of Facts: Confidential Informant considers xxxxxx radical and an associate of Communists, but have no definite proof that xxxxxx is a Communist, that xxxxxx is a radical labor man" (FBI files, p. 461). As a result, the researcher may find him/herself unwittingly and without justification filling in the blanks.

#### RELATIVE TO THE LABOR MOVEMENT

The HFS FBI files provide relatively little new information regarding the school's role within the labor movement. Probably the most useful information is that which HFS published or printed itself. These documents include pamphlets on various workshops, including curriculums and programs (FBI files, pp. 490, 517). One of the notable documents is a complete copy of a HFS song book, Songs of Field and Factory (pp. 359-395). The collection of the student newsletter, The Highlander Fling, beginning in 1937 and going through 1942 is invaluable to understanding HFS's involvement in the labor movement. There are also several lists of workshop participants and HFS supporters. Such lists provide insight into the types of labor leaders who were attracted to the "Highlander" approach and philosophy. These lists document HFS's claim that it was the leadership training center for the Southern labor movement. Unfortunately, documentation on some workshops is incomplete. Another document with historical significance is the letter endorsing Highlander as a labor school (p. 426). Even though there is a wealth of this type of primary documentation, most of it if not all can be found in other archives such as the HFS collection at the State Historical Society in Madison, Wisconsin.

What often attracted the FBI's interest were accusations by various people of HFS being a "hot bed for communism and anarchy" (FBI files, p.2). The FBI repeatedly responded to these accusations that it was unable to initiate an investigation based on hearsay evidence; there needed to be some evidence that HFS violated a "specific Federal law" (p.3). Yet, following almost every accusation of this nature there appeared in the files indication of new or renewed investigative activities by the FBI.

Yet, the "Communist problem" cannot fully explain the FBI's logic concerning its investigation of HFS. In the 1940s, following World War II, the Communist problem grew to be a central issue within the CIO. HFS, for its part, became a victim of this growing controversy. In the late 1940s, Horton and staff refused to support the anti-Communist rhetoric of the Taft-Hartley Act nor would they take loyalty oaths. For their strong stand in support of civil liberties, Horton and staff risked their long-standing relationship with the CIO and were even excluded from the postwar CIO southern organizing drive. From the perspective of these files, though, HFS's political position did not warrant an FBI investigation.

In addition, there is no documentation (not to say that it might not have been deleted or omitted from this file for reasons described above) on

the 1940 investigation of Highlander by the House Un-American Activities Committee and accusations by its chairman Martin Dies that the committee had received large amounts of material on Highlander. Nor is there any reference to the fact that in 1950 Highlander had some difficulty in attracting enough students to conduct its classes because of accusations by the CIO of its Communist Party affiliations, or that HFS worked closely with the UPWA--a union which was well known for its liberal policies and Communist rank and file members--in the early 1950s. And, finally there is no mention of Horton and Dombrowski being accused by Senator James Eastland's Senate Internal Security Sub-Committee in 1954 for alleged Communist activities. Ironically, while there is no documentation in the FBI main-case files on these events or on HFS's political stand against the anti-Communist hysteria, what is preserved in these files during this period, in comparison, seems trivial.

It is also important to note that there are years in which these FBI files contain no references at all to the school's labor activities. For example, there is almost a four year period between 1943 and 1947 where these files contain no documents, and very few documents between 1947 and 1950. This hiatus suggests that the FBI's interest in HFS was dormant for nearly seven years during the post-World War II era, a period in which the Communist issue was of primary concern for the labor movement. Thus, by juxtaposing an overall picture of what is contained and what is not contained in these files, there is strong inference that HFS's relation to the labor movement created only nominal interest on the FBI's part.

#### THE STRENGTH OF THESE FILES

While these FBI files can be faulted for their incompleteness, their poor condition, their lack of continuity, and striking omissions, they are an invaluable historical archive. They provide a third perspective--a perspective that compliments and, yet, contradicts that which can be developed from HFS archives or that of various unions which worked closely with HFS during its labor years. This third perspective portrays some of the local conservatism that distrusted "outsiders" who might agitate and threaten the status quo. This third perspective also portrays the FBI in a manner that is almost cynical if not comical. In the case of HFS, the FBI was unable to conduct a stealthy, insidious, or secret investigation that has earned it the notoriety the media so often projects. The best example of this fumbling is the botched investigation it attempted to conduct in the later half of 1950 (FBI files, pp. 594-711). Equally as dramatic is the forthrightness of HFS's staff in standing up and challenging the FBI's clear intrusion into their civil liberties. Rather than meekly attempting to conduct their work, Horton and company raised the visibility of this unlawful FBI investigation by contacting politicians such as Congressman Adam Clayton Powell, who in turn contacted the attorney general. All of which made good newspaper copy, showing to the country that HFS would not be bullied.

Clearly, based on the evidence that is included rather than not included in these files, one could argue that the FBI had more important investigations than this small (insignificant?) labor school. Throughout these documents between 1936 and 1954 the FBI appears resistant to pursue a full-fledged investigation of HFS. The intriguing aspect of this thesis, though, is that the researcher is not privy to what is not included. The full intent of the FBI's interests in HFS will remain a mystery until all files and records, including the non-record records, can be retrieved and analyzed. In summary, these files have great historical significance, but only in the context of being integrated with the other archival material which is readily available.

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## The Tutor-Learner Relationship in Literacy Education: Redefinition or Reproduction?

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**Abstract:** A qualitative study of university students working in literacy classrooms suggested that tutors felt most successful when they helped low-literate adults to develop academically and personally. There was minimal evidence of tutors playing the role of critical educators in questioning social inequities.

### Introduction

University educators increasingly view community service as a means for enhancing students' intellectual, moral, ethical, and personal development (Kendall & Associates, 1990). Similarly, adult basic educators look regularly to community volunteers for assistance in perpetually under-funded classrooms. What is not clear, however, is what, if anything, is supposed to change as a result of volunteers' involvement in these community settings. In the case of adult literacy education, are volunteers--generally serving as literacy tutors--supposed to help only with the teaching of basic reading, writing, and mathematics skills? Or might they also help learners with non-academic tasks such as finding employment? Or, going a step further, is helping those learners living in poverty to organize politically considered a desirable outcome for a "literacy tutor"?

While theorists and researchers have postulated a range of outcomes for literacy education in general, less is known about the experience and the outcomes of literacy education from the viewpoint of tutors. We need to listen to the voices of tutors themselves to understand the meaning they give to work with low-literate adults in basic education classrooms. This search for meaning was the focus of a qualitative study of undergraduate tutors in literacy education classrooms.

### Tutors in the Student Literacy Corps

In the case of the Federally-funded Student Literacy Corps project at Syracuse University, literacy tutors were placed in adult basic education classrooms throughout the Syracuse, New York community. In this sense, the tutoring format differed from the model espoused by most one-on-one tutor organizations, where one tutor and one learner work together independently. Undergraduates spent two hours each week in a classroom where they were given instruction in adult learning theory and literacy education, then placed as tutors for six hours weekly in community literacy programs. These programs operated out of churches, community centers, and schools. In many of these programs, tutors served as an "extra pair of hands" for the regular classroom teacher. In others, tutors were assigned to particular learners. In addition to the two faculty members co-teaching the course (the authors of this paper) were two graduate students who arranged



field placements for the student/tutors and monitored their progress throughout the semester.

### Theoretical Framework

As the study unfolded, it became clear that a theoretical base which illuminated the experience of university students caught between a new vision of the dignity and knowledge of the adult learner and an unwitting reproduction of the schooling hegemony would be appropriate. The work of Henry Giroux (1988) in particular is enlightening on the subject of teachers and literacy. He urges teachers to be intellectuals engaged in criticizing and transforming schools and society. True knowledge is produced not in the heads of educators, but in the process of writing, talking and struggling. The challenge for teachers is to break the model of university theorists producing knowledge, public school teachers reproducing knowledge, and students passively receiving knowledge.

The quest for literacy is not limited to those disadvantaged members of society who lack basic reading and writing skills--the common view of those "needing" literacy. Illiteracy cuts across class lines; to be literate is "to be present and active in the struggle for reclaiming one's voice, history, and future" (Giroux, 1988, p. 155). Literacy is not limited to analyzing text, but has to do with making meaning, with the intersection of subjectivities, objects, and social practices within relations of power. To ignore the power dynamic of education in general is to ignore those oppressive, exploitative social relations which surround the public school institution. Adult literacy education is indeed part of this institution--adults who come "back to school" to improve literacy skills are typically viewed as having initially failed in this same institution. While radical views on adult literacy situate literacy in the context of social empowerment (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1985; Freire, 1990; Giroux, 1988), the predominant model of literacy education resides in the school. Students are taught by teachers in classrooms, and teachers determine a subject-focused curriculum.

Giroux posits that it is not enough to analyze student or teacher voice from the Marxist perspective of reproduction, or from the logic of capital alone. Rather, student voice as well as teacher voice is part of a "polyphony of voices" (Giroux, 1988, p. 117) which interact with dominant and subordinate forms of power to shape discourse around schools and education. In this sense, tutors in the Student Literacy Corps have a unique voice: they are themselves students in the university; yet they become teachers once they step into the literacy tutor role. They have some freedom to shape this role, yet they are part of an established institution within a larger societal discourse around literacy. How tutors define their roles influences university educators' structuring of community service as well as perceptions of adult literacy education.

## Methods

In order to come to any conclusions about what constitutes "success" in the literacy education classroom from the viewpoint of a tutor, we need to learn how university students actually negotiate their work with the adult learners who frequent basic education programs. A qualitative research design seemed most appropriate. The constant comparative method of Glaser and Strauss (1967) was used to systematically organize data and break it into categories based on developing patterns. Initial categories which described university tutors' entry into the literacy educate site, their activities, their learning about adult learners and about tutoring contributed to a larger theory of tutor success within the tutor-learner relationship.

The project team of four collected and analyzed data from 51 students over a three semester period from the following sources: (1) written student expectations upon entry into the Student Literacy Corps, (2) student journals, with entries for each visit to the literacy classroom, (3) field notes of tutor/learner interactions as well as weekly university class sessions, and (4) group exit interviews with tutors at the end of the semester. The categories which emerged from these data sources were sorted through use of the computer program "Ethnograph". Team members first analyzed a sample of written transcripts of journal entries and site visits to develop preliminary coding categories. Once all four researchers agreed upon salient categories, the group split into two teams of two each, with each team analyzing half the data sources. Findings were discussed at regularly scheduled meetings in which all team members discussed and revised the theory emerging from data analysis.

## Results

Tutor voice emerged primarily from student journals, in which tutors recorded observations of literacy classroom activities, of interactions with adult learners, of their feelings about these interactions, and about literacy and the larger society. This voice was expressed through reflection upon: (1) their own experiences as students--in the university, and in elementary and secondary school, (2) their analyses of the nature of literacy and education, (3) their expectations of what they would experience in working as literacy tutors, and (4) their actual experiences in working as tutors. These reflections converged to form a theory of tutor success, that is, how tutors made sense of the experience of working with low-literate adult learners.

Tutor seemed most satisfied with interactions that suggested learners were making progress. Indeed, tutors typically entered the literacy education site with what they described as the "jitters", highly anxious about how learners would accept them and, most important, their offers of assistance. "No one asked for help--I can't do what I'm supposed to do" was heard in the the initial days of tutoring, before tutors had learned how to balance their offers of assistance with learners'

need for that same help. The following comments were typical of the range of emotions and responses in working with learners *who made progress*:

I was able to reach him, and really teach something which was important to him. It felt fantastic.

Her writing has improved unbelievably. She has improved so much; it makes me feel we are accomplishing something.

She felt pretty proud of herself and so was I.

Progress was only partly academic. Tutors were equally as excited about the gains learners made in personal growth and self-confidence. They revelled in the learners who could "do the whole workbook" without the tutor's help. More difficult to solve were the problems of learners--especially women--in abusive relationships who tutors felt needed more self-esteem in life in general. As tutors learned more about learner's lives, they had a variety of reactions: respect for the "brave" single mother who was "trying to put her life together", intrigued by the learner who had owned her own business in New York for ten years, disturbed by the Vietnam vets who came to school to "re-remember" what they had learned years before, and shocked by the woman who had given up several children for adoption and was now hoping to have more.

Tutors also described a growing closeness with learners, as they worked together on problems and experienced similar emotions. Slowly, the boundaries between teacher and student grew less distinct:

It's great to see how our relationships has evolved; I'm no longer just a helper, but someone who he views as a "legitimate player" in his educational performance.

He thanked me...I told him I enjoyed working with him, but he had done the work.

Every time we got problems right, we looked at each other and smiled--it was a great feeling.

The converse of the elation tutors felt when learners progressed was the despair and frustration felt when learners were not learning at the rate expected, or worse, when learners didn't show up at all. Tutors spoke often of learners "finally getting the grasp" of a new concept. As the level of frustration rose, observations reflected desperation: "He's just not getting it--I don't know what to do with him." When learners were particularly slow to learn, tutors often appeared to latch on to an old, familiar model--the school teacher. Their journal entries took on a clinical tone:

I worked with Ron on long division. He doesn't know his times tables, and he cannot go further until those are learned. His attention span is not where it should be. I don't think he's "slow" but he does not retain knowledge successfully.

This diagnostic stance was perceived as part of the teacher's role. While a number of tutors questioned how learners had emerged from the American educational system with minimal literacy skills, very few student-tutors expressed curiosity about how learners interacted with the larger political environment:

I tried to talk to some people about why there are or are not registered to vote. Nobody had any substantial reasons. Perhaps the argument that the legitimacy of the government is in doubt when the majority of the people don't vote is legitimate. Since there are no candidates who will substantially help or hurt the majority of the people, who cares? Only the issues like David Duke or abortion galvanize the potential electorate, then their interest is only transitory.

In the final analysis, the values that tutors espoused through the Student Literacy Corps were those of the sympathetic, concerned teacher. They came to respect people whose lives were different from theirs, they learned that teachers didn't always have to "know it all", that they could help other people, and that they could learn from their students. There was a vague feeling that somehow the public schools had failed these people. However, if they worked hard enough and engaged the help of a tutor, low-literate adults could eventually learn the skills that had eluded them earlier. They would, indeed, finally "get it". The role of the teacher--a role that tutors assumed when tutoring--was to encourage students, to build their confidence, and to help them learn.

#### Discussion

What is the role of a volunteer tutor in literacy education? Perhaps a larger question is related to the role that we want teachers to play in literacy education. In general, tutors are doing exactly what society would like them to--help individuals develop. If, however, we follow the model of critical pedagogy espoused by Giroux, teachers play a critical role in opening the dialogue in schools to address the power differentials in American society. This approach demands that teachers move beyond the traditional role of fostering individual improvement. It would ask that teachers--and tutors--question the issues raised by their students about self-esteem, about the work ethic, and about their stories of abuse from a different vantage point. The current dialogue between teachers and students rests on the premise that individuals (students) will work through their problems with the help of professionals (teachers). If we truly see literacy as being active in the struggle to reclaim voice, history, and future, we must start to speak in collective rather than in individual terms.



Undergraduate tutors are caught between the tradition that is their past, and a growing awareness of what the "real world" is like. To reproduce the tradition takes little effort--the models of sympathetic, caring teachers abound in literacy education. But to redefine the power relationships between the various players in the literacy discourse will necessitate a major disruption of the status quo. Tutors will become critical educators only if this role is sanctioned and modeled by their own teachers--those of us who teach in universities.

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VISUAL PRESENTATION  
Research in Action: Making Popular Education Work

Presenters: Hal Beder, Mary Graves, Colleen Coleman, Sarah Deely, Kristi Droppers, Marian Eberly, Pat Leahey, Tom Karlson, Bo Keppel, David Kring, Eileen Quaglino, Mary Ribeiro, Ollie Singleton, Noulmook Sutdhibhaslip, Karen Toole, Connie Zimmerman and others.

Purposes: 1. to stimulate reflection on the nature and use of research in a popular education context. 2. to promote dialogue on the problems and issues associated with adapting Latin American forms of popular education to a North American context.

Format: Our presentation has three parts.

1. Introduction [20 min]. The introduction is a media-based "experience" that will introduce participants to the context of our work.

2. A skit, The Reflection, [75 min]. A group of North American adult educators reflect on their experiences with popular education in Latin America and discuss how they can adapt what they have learned to their own practice.

The skit is a vehicle for contextualizing eight mini-presentations focusing on critical aspects of popular education [Participation & Collective Orientation, Sistematizacion, Praxis, Human Justice & Daily Needs, Empowerment, Getting Started, Reflection, and Strategic Action]. These mini presentations will feature video clips, photographs and popular education research techniques and exercises. Several will involve audience participation.

3. Participant Reflection Exercise [Whatever time remains and into the future].

This presentation is one product of an exchange with CLASEP, a popular education, non-governmental organization in Mexico. To date, the exchange has involved a two-week institute in the summer of 1992 and a two-week follow-up institute in Mexico in January, 1993. The exchange was funded by a grant from the International Council for Adult Education through the Transformative Research Network.

Conceptions of Transformation in Adult Education:  
Views of Self, Society, and Social Change

John M. Dirkx<sup>1</sup>, Phyllis Cunningham,  
Mecthild Hart, Jack Mezirow, Sue Scott

**Abstract** The purpose of this symposium is to identify and critically examine theoretical assumptions implicit in four views of transformative adult education, with particular emphasis on notions of self, society, social change, and the role of the adult educator in transformation.

The idea of transformation has recently emerged within adult education as a way of framing discourse surrounding purposes of the field, processes of adult learning, and roles of the adult educator (Boyd & Myers, 1988; Collins, 1991; Cunningham, 1992; Daloz, 1986; Dirkx, 1991; Hart, 1990; Mezirow, 1991; Scott, 1992). While reflecting a common focus on change, this discourse is characterized by distinctly different theoretical perspectives. These differences result in ongoing tensions in adult education between self and society, and sharp disagreements over the meaning of social change and the role of the adult educator in that process. In this paper, several adult education researchers summarize their views with respect to the meaning of transformation and fundamental assumptions about the nature of the self, society, social change, and the role of adult educators in transformation. It is the authors' hope that this symposium will foster further dialogue around the meaning of transformative education within the field of adult education.

Change Through Shift in Meaning Schemes & Perspectives

Jack Mezirow (1991) draws on developmental and cognitive psychology, psychoanalytic thought, and social theory to develop an interdisciplinary view of transformation. He defines transformation as fundamental change in meaning structures. The first of these structures, "meaning perspectives," refers to generalized predispositions or personal paradigms shaped by socio-linguistic, psychological, and epistemological factors. Meaning schemes are derived from meaning perspectives and refer to specific sets of attitudes, beliefs, feelings, and knowledge pertaining to and shaping particular experiences.

As individuals learn to use language, they elaborate existing meaning schemes or build or learn new ones (Mezirow, 1991). Transformative learning, however, is manifest in fundamental changes in meaning schemes, and/or perspectives. Meaning schemes may be transformed by critical reflection on the process of one's ways of knowing or problem solving. Meaning

perspectives are transformed by critical reflection on the premises upon which a problem has been defined. The assumptions of one's social beliefs and ideologies are the focus of critical reflection, and are increasingly recognized within their cultural contexts: how they were acquired, how they affect understanding, and their consequences in the lives of others. Becoming critically reflective leads to an increasing ability to make one's own meanings and to realize one's own values.

A learning society - a reflective participatory democracy - is both the means and the major social goal of adult education. Such a learning society requires conditions conducive to reflective learning. These include: a) accurate and complete information, b) freedom from coercion and self-deception, c) equality in assuming the various roles of discourse, d) openness to alternative perspectives, e) ability to weigh evidence and evaluate arguments, f) ability to be critically reflective of assumptions, and g) willingness to accept an informed, objective and rational consensus as a legitimate test of the validity of beliefs.

To realize such a reflective, participatory, and democratic society, present social, institutional, and systemic constraints must be modified through education and social action. Adult educators work toward this goal by fostering critical reflection, rational discourse, and reflective action among their learners. They create communities of reflection and discourse in diverse settings - families, workplaces, educational institutions, communities and other public spaces - with norms which protect learners from the intrusion of power and influence on their rational deliberations. They also play a key role in assisting learners to acquire the understandings necessary to overcome situational, emotional and knowledge constraints to taking reflective action. Educators, however, are not advocates, recruiters or organizers for particular social causes. Instead, their commitment is to help learners negotiate their own meanings, realize their own values and make their own action decisions.

#### Change Through Intrapsychic Dialogue

Informed by a depth psychology perspective (Jacobi, 1965; Washburn, 1988; Whitmont, 1991) and a tradition of social action, Sue Scott (1991) sees an integral relationship between transformation of deep psychic structures and the structures of consciousness within a group, community, or society. According to Scott, transformation involves the development of a relationship with the dark or shadow side of human nature (Jacobi, 1965). Through dialogue with the unconscious aspects of the self, transformation or



individuation (Jacobi, 1965) is possible. Transformation involves owning one's shadow, a movement from the personal realms where ego consciousness reigns to the transpersonal where "the ego is a servant of spirit" (Washburn, p. 155).

Encountering the shadow requires a recognition and acceptance of, and integration with, the chaotic, the emotional, and the spirit, attributes which are often activated by involvement in social movements and change. Recent work in depth psychology underscores the importance and role of the social context in transformation (Boyd, 1991; Dirkx, 1991; Progroff, 1973). Participation in intense relationships and groups often brings one face-to-face with the shadow side of oneself and the collectively shared, unconscious myths of the group. For action to be effective, the personal shadow and the collective myths must be made conscious. Thus, experience in confronting and dealing with and understanding the chaotic nature of the self is important. Without it, the rational side of human nature can be overcome by the more powerful forces of the unconscious, creating the perception of conflict in the social arena as frightening and potentially destructive. At best, it becomes difficult to sustain action.

Education for transformation involves transformation of both self and society through a necessary dialectic that entails more than critical self-reflection on cognitive presuppositions or assumptions. Knowledge of self and society is also gained through dialogue within a collective on the primordial images that emerge in action and their meaning for individuals and the community. Social action becomes the mediator for the confrontation with the beast, the greed, and the power which become symbols for the greater parts of ourselves. Such work can provide the psychic strength necessary to sustain social action. If one enters into social action for the primary purposes of personal transformation, then the critical theorists are justified in labeling it psychologistic. The intention must be to collectively engage in action founded on a value system that is agreed upon by consensus in community. The educator's responsibility is to "work through" the conflict evoked in confrontation through symbolic work on archetypes or primordial images that become apparent. Educators can best provide these opportunities through community based programs or experientially based classes in non-institutional settings. Educators then become colleagues or co-workers collectively exploring their life myths.

#### Change Through a Self - Society Dialectic

In contrast to Mezirow (1991) and Scott (1991), Mecthild Hart (1990) utilizes feminist and critical

social theory to connect personal transformation with the way society disempowers, oppresses and destroys. The personal, in her view, is permeated by the social. What are apparently intensely personal processes of transformation can carry potent criticisms of larger social structures, leading to social transformation and vice versa. Broadly speaking, any process accompanied by a profound, lasting "undoing" of disempowering, oppressive, or destructive forces can be called "transformative." Thus, transformation is grounded in a critical analysis of the oppressive features and mechanisms of society. The meaning of "transformative" is therefore "situated" in a specific context that needs to be named in critical ways. It arises out of an attempt to answer the question what is it that needs transforming? What outer and inner realities contribute to "the logic of destruction" (Bahro, 1989, 1991)?

How would a transformative education be envisioned? By investigating how education is implicated in the logic of destruction or directly contributes to it, possibilities can be discerned. There is a need to analyze existing educational contexts and their potential for fostering transformative learning. Out of this analysis, new practical educational responses and programs can be developed that are more conducive to transformative learning. Additionally, the role of the individual educator can be addressed, including one's possibilities for contributing to transformation within his or her particular context. Hart believes that a person experiences transformation when the split between mind and body is joined, when a connection is made with elements of the soul which heal this split. This positive view of transformation derives from a critique of society, the way a person lives in society, and how society splits people internally and from each other.

Thus, the question of what an educator can do individually needs to be addressed in close association with how one views transformation, and what specific content is given to it. If transformation is a mind/body event, and not primarily a cognitive event, very specific questions must be asked about pedagogical work and its limitations. Hart believes that transformation is not only a transformation of being, but also that it precludes interventionist practices (Willis, 1991). Personal transformation cannot be orchestrated because its occurrence is so intimately tied to a person's unique biography and subjectivity, thus making transformation ultimately unpredictable. However, it is possible to reconstruct with students how one's efforts contributed to transformational occurrences; by analyzing materials, themes, approaches, or forms of interaction, and the ways the limitations of one's context work against the possibility for

transformative education. Regardless of the outcomes of these analyses, educators can only give support, guidance, or assistance, and make offerings of knowledge about transformative learning if they have themselves begun the journey of transformation.

#### Change Through a Polity of Democracy

Phyllis Cunningham (1992) interprets transformative education from the perspective of critical social theory. According to Cunningham, transformative learning occurs within the biography of a person. The word biography is used to denote that any human being is both framed by the social context in which their formation occurred and affected by historical forces. To experience transformation is to see with new eyes and to comprehend a different, more inclusive perspective than one held before. This viewpoint recognizes that the reality society gives one is socially constructed and in those constructions are inequities. These inequities are designed to privilege those who have power; they are related to imperialism, race, ethnicity, class and gender. Accordingly, the uncritical socialized person accepts these inequities as taken for granted truths. A hegemonic force is continually adapted by organic intellectuals in order that those who have privilege can maintain it (Gramsci, 1978). Transformational learning occurs when one grasps with growing insight the way biography intersects with the social structure, and the privilege and oppression of persons based on power.

Accordingly, transformative education has the objective of democratizing our social world through the action of persons engaged in transformative learning. Cunningham (1992) calls this critical pedagogy. As persons problematize their social context they make analyses of social relationships, social "facts", social forces which impinge on them. These analyses are debated, "unpacked," reorganized and new formulations occur. These new formulations must be tested through action and finally critical reflection on that action. This critical reflection then opens up new glimpses and new insights which initiate new formulations, new analyses and new action.

For at least two reasons, personal transformation cannot occur apart from social transformation. Transformation is a dialectical process between thought and action. To deny one is to deny the other. Social structures define power relationships and asymmetrical power relationships reproduce themselves if not resisted. Resistance is human agency. It is the potential of a human being to change structures and to make history. If one has experienced personal transformation, one has seen how asymmetrical power relationships are formed. The dialectical process

demands resistance as does human logic. To not act is to commit oneself to another dialectic of ethical transgression, e.g., one experiences personal freedom at the expense of another's exploitation. This is not transformation; this is complicity with oppression.

Second, to not struggle against perceived powerful forces which dominate others is to deny your socialness derived from the collective. This is individualism where one enjoys group privilege while denying responsibility for the social group. To deny one's society is to deny one's own self. This, too, is not transformation.

Transformative learning takes place as one struggles with others against oppression, to act to change oppressive conditions. The social changes that we can effect are sometimes transitory and sometimes small, but it is the struggle to make social change that confirms and validates our own transformation. It is the continuous dialectical relationship between ourselves and the struggle for, and in anticipation of such transformation that provides continuing conscientization.

An adult educator is a co-learner; adult learners are co-educators. Both can make mistakes and each must be responsible for personal and collective mistakes. Ethical conditions are met, however, if collective educative activity organized democratically promotes the development of intellectuals, regardless of their gender, class, race, ethnicity, who in turn are able to produce their own knowledge and use it for the common good by negating social constructed inequities. To suggest that to educate for personal transformation is somehow not political while social transformation is a political act is to deny the social anchoring of consciousness. To deny personal transformation and to champion social transformation is to deny the unique biography of each person and his or her potential contribution to society and is equally inappropriate. To link personal and social transformation is to construct a polity of democracy.



### Conclusion

In exploring the role of faith communities in a marketplace world, Batstone (1993) suggested that an integration of the personal and the social "will be vital to shaping character and action for a people moving toward shalom, or wholeness" (p. 16). Arguing for a "radical humanism," Fromm (1989), wrote, "any attempt to overcome the possible fatal crisis of the industrialized...world...must be based on the liberation of man in the classic, humanist sense as well as in the modern, political and social sense" (pp. 7-8). The voices expressed in this paper invite such an integration. The challenge is clearly presented to each adult educator/learner/practitioner/researcher. It is an age old challenge cast in the language and concerns of a late 20th century world.

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#### Footnote

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